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✓ **SAVE** MONEY
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THE RISE IN ADULT ADHD
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Melissa Doyle

'AS I GET OLDER, I KNOW WHO I AM'

PRO TIPS
Make your skincare *work harder!*

Must read
THE HEALING POWER OF A FRIENDSHIP

Summer pleasures

- HOW TO *REALLY* RELAX
- TASTY LOW-CARB MEALS
- SUPERCHARGE YOUR MOOD

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See page 108.

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Time to hit refresh

I recently had an unexpectedly wonderful adventure when I left my family behind briefly and attended a seven-day yoga retreat in Byron Bay, New South Wales. Meeting and mixing with new people turned out to be a fabulous way to park 'real life' at the door and embark on a rewarding 'escape'. As it turned out, in addition to the benefits of doing two hours of movement and meditation each morning, it was the delightful company that was the surprise health bonus. We shared delicious healthy meals together and, more than that, my housemates, Jane, Laila, Marika, and I laughed until we cried with the kind of joyous abandon we'd had as teenagers. And, at the end of the week, not only had I made new friends for life, but there was something lovely about returning to my family as a fresh, lighter version of me. As we all know, holidays are always a good idea… and holidays that lead you into an entirely new dimension are even better!

Meanwhile, whether you're coming to this issue in the frenzied run-up to the Christmas season, or you're opening these pages while lounging on a deck chair in the well-earned break that follows, we've got plenty in store to make this summer your healthiest, happiest yet. On page 60, personal trainer Jenna Wolfe shows us a simple, super-short exercise routine to improve your strength and flexibility in just two weeks. We then take a deep dive into the health benefits of plant-based eating on page 72. Even if you're already vegetarian, or you eat meat only occasionally, there's lots to learn from our expert guide to ensure you get the right nutrition and maximise the well-researched long-life rewards of eating this way (and with grocery bills rising, you'll also appreciate the benefits to your wallet when you take meat off the menu).

But my favourite story this issue comes from *Prevention* writer Sabrina Rogers-Anderson, who, when I suggested doing a story on friendship, said: "I wish I could feature my bestie and me. We always say we're each other's 'person'. She's the one person I can count on through anything." And, as life turned out, they'd lean into that friendship through extraordinary circumstances. Hear her touching story on page 90.

Enjoy this issue!

Andrea

ANDREA DUVALL
EDITOR

PHOTOGRAPHY (MAIN): JEREMY GREIVE

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this *or* that?

We asked for your views.*
Here's what you said.

Q BREAKFAST OR MID-MORNING SNACK?

73% **BREAKFAST IS A MUST EVERY DAY**

27% *Just a snack will do*

Q HONEY OR PEANUT BUTTER?

83% DEFINITELY NUTTY (PEANUT BUTTER)

17% **BUTTER ME SWEET! (HONEY)**

Q DO YOU MEDITATE REGULARLY?

35% YES, IT'S SO HELPFUL!

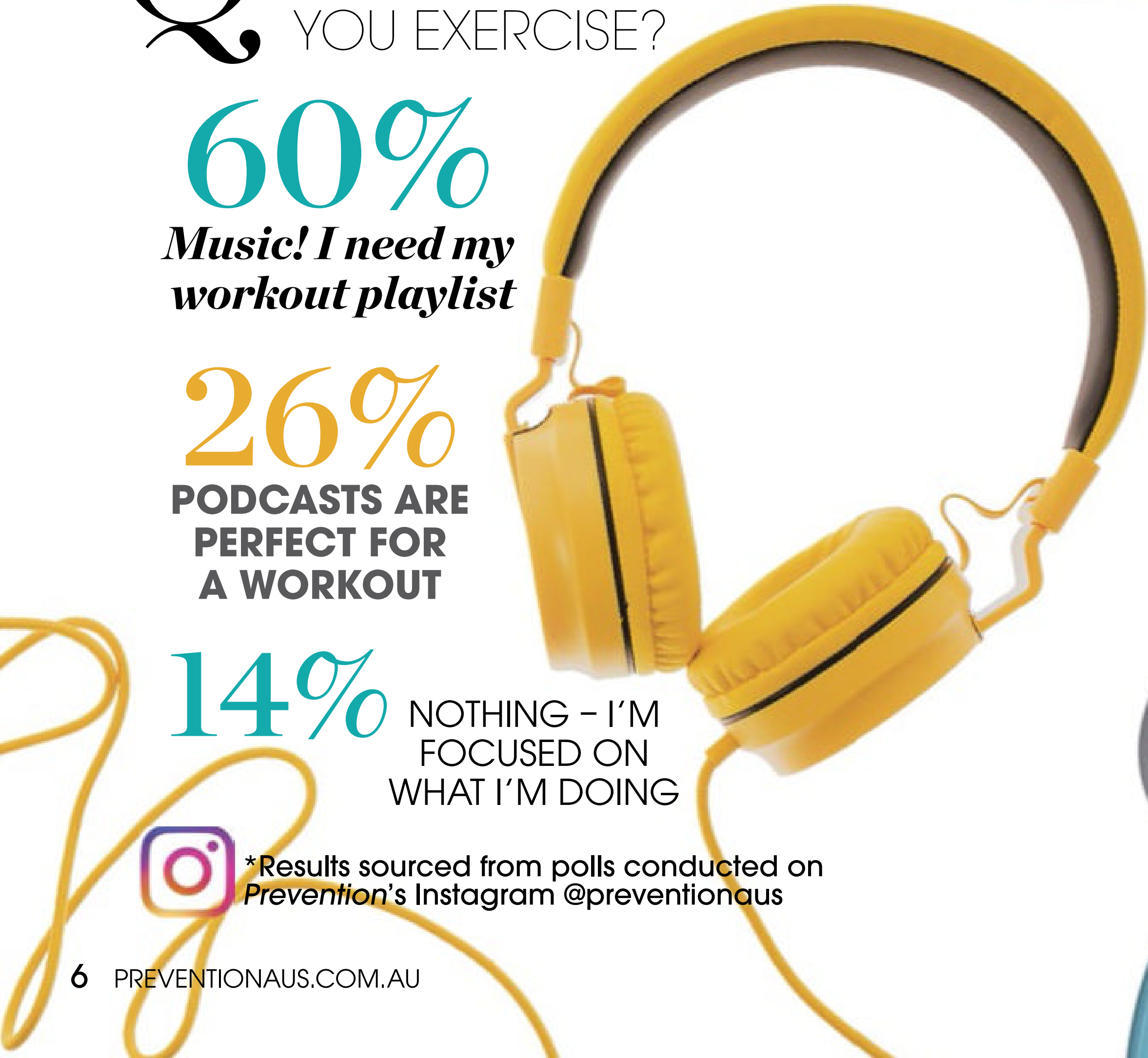
65% *No, it's not for me*

Q WHAT DO YOU LISTEN TO WHEN YOU EXERCISE?

60% ***Music! I need my workout playlist***

26% **PODCASTS ARE PERFECT FOR A WORKOUT**

14% NOTHING – I'M FOCUSED ON WHAT I'M DOING



Q ARE YOU AN EARLY BIRD OR A NIGHT OWL?

64% **WAKING UP EARLY SETS ME UP FOR THE DAY**

36% I THRIVE AT NIGHT!

*Results sourced from polls conducted on *Prevention*'s Instagram @preventionaus

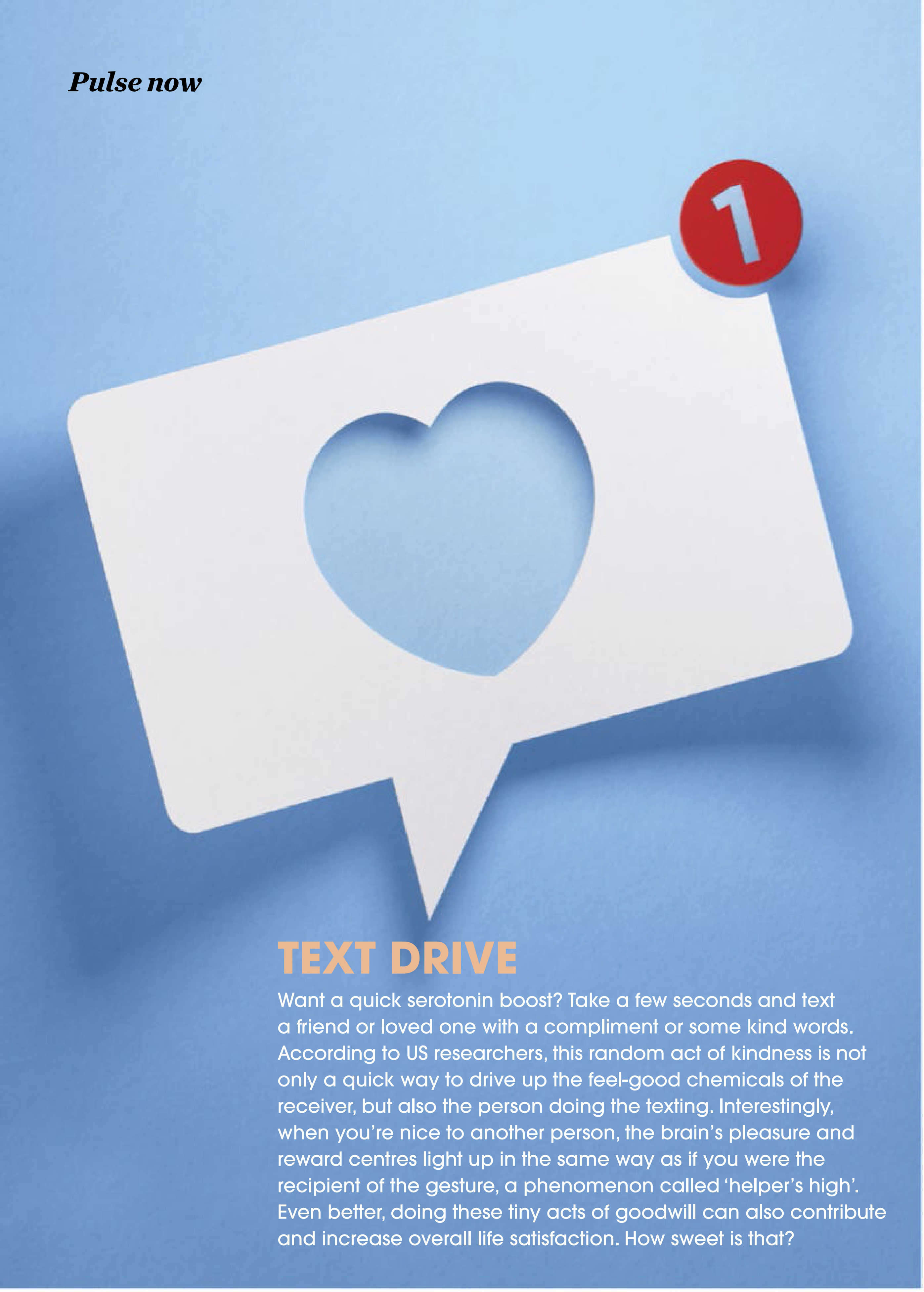
PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Pulse

MORE JOY, LESS STRESS – FOR A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU

> Sometimes it takes a wrong turn to get you to the right place.
>
> Mandy Hale

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

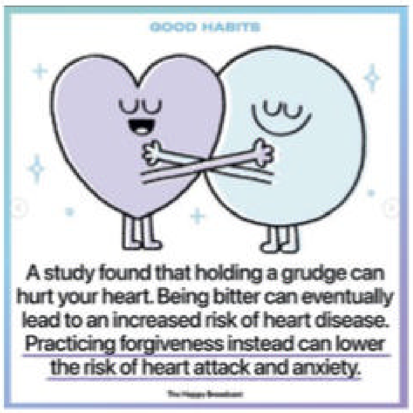


TEXT DRIVE

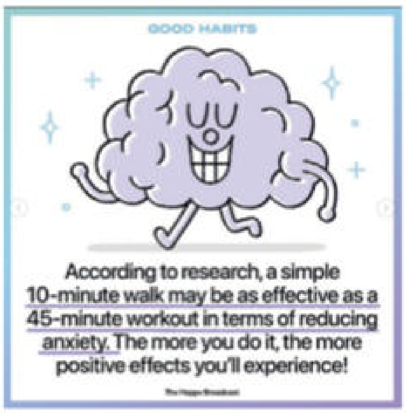
Want a quick serotonin boost? Take a few seconds and text a friend or loved one with a compliment or some kind words. According to US researchers, this random act of kindness is not only a quick way to drive up the feel-good chemicals of the receiver, but also the person doing the texting. Interestingly, when you're nice to another person, the brain's pleasure and reward centres light up in the same way as if you were the recipient of the gesture, a phenomenon called 'helper's high'. Even better, doing these tiny acts of goodwill can also contribute and increase overall life satisfaction. How sweet is that?

Follow this feed

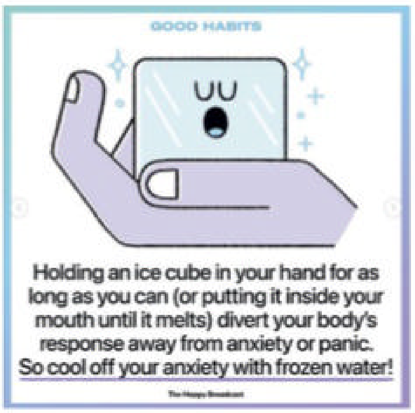
Is your Instagram feed inspiring you? Follow **The Happy Broadcast** (@the_happy_broadcast) for smile-inducing, anxiety-free, science-based content from around the world. Here's a fun sample…



A study found that holding a grudge can hurt your heart. Being bitter can eventually lead to an increased risk of heart disease. Practicing forgiveness instead can lower the risk of heart attack and anxiety.



According to research, a simple 10-minute walk may be as effective as a 45-minute workout in terms of reducing anxiety. The more you do it, the more positive effects you'll experience!



Holding an ice cube in your hand for as long as you can (or putting it inside your mouth until it melts) divert your body's response away from anxiety or panic. So cool off your anxiety with frozen water!

Prevention AUSTRALIA Book Club

MELISSA DOYLE
15 Seconds of BRAVE
The wisdom of survivors
WILD
LIFE
WHAT I COOK when NOBODY'S WATCHING
By POH
RECIPES & MUSINGS FOR A SIMPLE LIFE

INSPIRING GOOD READS

15 Seconds of Brave

By Melissa Doyle (Penguin, $34.99)

Our cover star, Melissa Doyle, shares an inspiring collection of beautifully written human stories of resilience and strength that have impacted her the most during her successful career. Keep the tissues close.

Wild Life

By Anna Carlile (Hardie Grant, $33.90)

Immerse yourself in the beauty of 'rewilding', the concept of disconnecting from the everyday and reconnecting with nature and your wild self. Offering 50 inspiring projects that'll bring the magic of nature and the wild back into your life, it's the perfect way to start 2023.

What I Cook When Nobody's Watching

By Poh Ling Yeow (Plum, $44.99)

In this very personal cookbook, Poh shares her tips and tricks to easy, delicious food and household hints that'll leave you satisfied and joyful. It's beautifully illustrated by a close friend, which adds special meaning to each page and recipe.

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 packet Chang's Pad Thai Rice Noodles
- 1 large carrot, grated or finely julienned
- 1 packet Chang's Gluten Free Fried Noodles
- 120g baby spinach
- 1 tablespoon black sesame seeds
- 20 snow peas, sliced on the diagonal
- 100g bean sprouts, rinsed and drained
- 1 large red capsicum, thinly sliced

DRESSING

- 4 tablespoons Chang's Tamari Light Soy Sauce
- 2 tablespoons Chang's Sesame Oil
- 4 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 red chilli, seeds removed, thinly sliced OR chilli flakes
- 2 tablespoons fresh ginger, finely grated
- 1 tablespoon caster sugar
- Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Optional: *2 tablespoons of Chang's Crispy Salad Noodle Dressing for added flavour and texture*

A PERFECT REFRESHING SUMMER DISH!

RECIPE

1 Prepare all salad vegetables, chop & set aside.
2 Cook noodles according to packet instructions. Place under cold water and drain.
3 Combine all dressing ingredients & toss noodles through dressing sauce.
4 Add spinach, bean sprouts, snow peas, capsicum & carrot. Toss & combine well with the noodles.
5 Garnish with chilli slices, Chang's Gluten Free Fried Noodles and black sesame seeds.

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Nutrition

BETTER HEALTH, MORE ENERGY AND USEFUL, EXPERT-APPROVED ADVICE ON A PLATE

Fruit punch

Mangoes are known as the king of fruits – and for good reason! Not only are they delicious, but they also boast an impressive nutritional profile. Indeed, studies have linked eating mangoes to multiple benefits, including improving your immunity and digestive and heart health. Plus, they're an excellent source of water-soluble vitamin C, which helps your body absorb iron and also promotes cell growth and repair. Another plus? One study found that consuming fresh fruit like mangoes at the start of a meal could help reduce the chance of overeating later on, leaving you feeling more satisfied. An average mango has just 250kJ (60 cals), so dig in today! Love it dried? Although still rich in all the good bits, it'll have a much higher sugar content, so eat it mindfully.

Did you know?

A ripe, fresh mango will have a fragrant tropical scent around the stem that varies in intensity depending on the variety.

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Meat halfway

A fan of plant-based 'meat' substitutes? Fakin' bacon perhaps or vegie burgers? Well, a new study suggests that the proteins in some of these substitute products don't stack up as well nutritionally as real meat products. Why? The authors, whose findings were published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, found that we don't absorb some of these processed plant proteins as well as animal proteins. The study compared chicken with a plant-based version made of soy and wheat gluten and found that the chicken protein still came out on top. The goal now is to find ingredients that can be added to meat substitutes, like that satisfying burger, to improve protein uptake and give their health cred some serious legs. Stay tuned.

4

The number of cups of black, green or oolong tea per day that may help lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

SOURCE: EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF DIABETES

Late gain

Prone to nibbling on a late-night snack before bed? You might want to let go of that pantry handle. New research suggests that tucking in late at night might cause your hunger cues to become out of whack. In the study, participants who ate four hours after dinner had increased levels of ghrelin (the hormone that triggers hunger) while leptin (the hormone that signals feeling full) was lower than those who ate early. The findings suggest that late-night munching can cause you to feel hungrier than normal and thus gain weight. So, aim to have your dinner a bit earlier and try to avoid snacks past your meal time.

Sweet dreams

Here's another reason to prioritise your sleep. A new US study has shown a substantial link between how well you slept last night and your body's ability to control blood sugar levels the next day. The study also suggests that if you know you got less shut-eye than usual, maybe opt for a lower-carb breakfast.

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Air hostess

Serve up some tasty munchies with just an air fryer, aka your kitchen's most versatile appliance.

SWEET POTATO NACHOS

Using sweet potato in place of tortilla chips is a nutrient-dense way to enjoy this yummy dish. Crisp up potato rounds in the air fryer and then pile on your favourite toppings. "Think black beans, tomato, coriander and avocado or guacamole," says dietitian Dawn Jackson Blatner. "It's a super-nourishing bite!"

VEGAN 'CHICKEN' WINGS

These use cauliflower florets instead of chicken. Combine 175ml of tamari with a pinch of smoked paprika, a half cup of plain flour, a clove of minced garlic and 250ml of soy milk. Whisk well. Cut and dry florets and then toss well in the sauce and cook for 10 minutes or until crispy.

FRENCH TOAST

"This brunch staple has a reputation for not being healthy, but it really can be, and you can make it super quickly in an air fryer," explains Dawn. "Simply dip wholegrain bread in protein-rich eggs and then cook until nicely golden. Top with more goodness such as cinnamon, Greek yoghurt and fresh berries.

FRUIT CRISPS

Place frozen berries or diced apples or peaches in an oven-safe ramekin and then top with a mixture of 3 tablespoons rolled oats, 2 tablespoons almond flour, 1 tablespoon coconut oil and a dash of cinnamon and sea salt, and then cook in the air fryer. "It turns fruit into a full-blown dessert," says Dawn.

Fun fact

More than two million air fryers were sold in Australia during the past two years, just by Philips alone.

SOURCE: APPLIANCE RETAILER MAGAZINE

PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK

1757kJ
(420CALS)
Your brain needs this much a day just to keep functioning.

Speed up your metabolism

Clothes getting tighter, sleeping poorly or just feeling the strain? By keeping your internal motor, aka your metabolism, revved up, you'll sort out all these issues and more. Here's how to put the foot down.

The word 'metabolism' gets thrown around a lot, but many people don't know exactly what it means. Think of it this way: If your body were a car, your metabolism would be the engine. But, instead of it being housed in one central location under the bonnet, your cells work together to turn food into fuel. That means the kilojoules (calories) your body burns – by moving around, but mostly just by your breathing, thinking and, well, existing – are turned into the energy it needs to keep every organ and system running smoothly. How efficiently this happens depends on everything from your diet to your genetics to your stress levels – even your sleep cycle plays a role. Here's what you need to know to pep up your metabolism.

1

IT MATTERS WHAT FOOD YOU EAT – AND WHEN!

As your body digests a food, your brain factors in the nutrients in it, your digestive hormones and your level of activity as it decides whether to use those kilojoules immediately or store them for later. The pace at which kJs are used is called your metabolic rate, and a few things affect it – like how much you eat. Consistently consuming more kilojoules than your body needs means a lot of energy isn't used; that excess is stored as fat, which shows up as weight gain. When you dine is a factor, too. In general, eating every three to four hours is ideal. And, yes, breakfast is key: People who skip it tend to have a surge of the hunger hormone ghrelin later on, leading to night-time munching that can disrupt metabolism and sleep. And food choices are important. Low-nutrient items, like sweets and chips, are rapidly digested, leaving you hungry again soon. Instead, munch on fibre-rich picks (wholegrains, lots of fruit and vegies) and plenty of protein, which will keep you full longer.

2

EXERCISE KICKS YOUR METABOLISM INTO GEAR

Basically, the more you move, the more kilojoules you burn. Working out speeds your metabolism by increasing levels of testosterone, growth hormone and other hormones that suppress appetite. Physical activity also helps you sleep better, which further keeps your metabolism humming along because good sleep helps balance metabolic hormones. Here's your three-point exercise plan:

1. DO CARDIO Interval training (repeated spurts of high-intensity activity with short rest periods in between) is great for burning fat and raising your metabolic rate. It also produces afterburn, which means you continue to torch kilojoules even after you've finished a workout. Do 20 to 30 minutes of this at least three times a week.

2. BUILD MUSCLE It burns three times as many kJs as fat, so the more muscle you have, the more energy you burn. Aim for two weight workouts per week.

3. JUST MOVE All the little motions you do – walking to the bathroom, fidgeting during meetings – expend kilojoules. In fact, one study found that people who did lots of these types of movements burned up to 8368kJ (2000cals) a day – wow!

3

STRESS AND SLEEP HAVE AN IMPACT

Learning to manage stress is critical: When you experience it long term, it triggers a release of hormones that mess with your digestion and your metabolism slows. Getting enough shut-eye is also important – when you're sleep deprived, your body goes into conservation mode and doesn't burn as many kilojoules. Of course, stress disrupts sleep, and poor-quality sleep can leave you frazzled and irritable (and prone to craving kJ-heavy pick-me-ups). Make it a daily priority to de-stress for a few moments (try yoga or meditation) and, if you can, use up any unused annual leave to decompress. Studies show that taking time off can increase happiness, strengthen relationships and ease stress.

How your kilojoules are put to work

60 to 75 per cent are turned into fuel to power organs such as the heart, lungs and brain

15 to 30 per cent are used as you move, whether that's exercising or simply dusting the house

10 to 15 per cent are burned during digestion

Metabolism basics

STEP 1: You eat

STEP 2: The food is broken down by the body into simple forms of carbohydrates, fat and protein

STEP 3: The kilojoules (calories) in those components are then converted to energy, which is then used by your cells and tissues to grow and repair themselves

But don't panic if you've gained a little weight!

If you can't eat as much without putting on kilos, it's just these factors coming into play:

Age

You lose muscle mass as you get older; this slows metabolism because fat accounts for more of your weight and burns fewer kJs than muscle.

Menopause

The hormonal changes, such as a dip in oestrogen levels, may contribute to a slower metabolism.

Genetics

You may have been born this way. Some people simply have a slower metabolism.

Gender

Men tend to have less body fat and more muscle than women of the same age and weight. But take heart! The lifestyle changes within these pages can help. In the meantime, be gentle with yourself. P

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Sugar refinery

Dietitian and physiologist Yvonne Webb sifts through the clutter to give us the real deal on sugar.

Fun fact

Technically, sugar has no use-by date. While it's recommended that you discard sugar after two years, that's just because it might get clumpy and unusable.

THINKING REQUIRES ENERGY – AND SUGAR!

Brain cells need a constant supply of glucose because the brain doesn't normally burn any other fuel. It consumes about 120 grams of glucose a day, which corresponds to about 1760kJ (420cals). This is about 60 per cent of the glucose used daily by the body.

A SUGAR-FREE DIET? NOT IF YOU'RE EATING FRUIT & VEG

Some plants store their carbohydrate energy in their roots. We know that young carrots taste sweet, for instance, because they store sugars. As the plant gets larger and older and is still accumulating energy, all those sugar molecules are joined together and converted into starch. Therefore, older carrots taste less sweet. To break down those molecular bonds and turn the starches back into sugar, you can simply cook them – either by roasting, boiling or steaming.

On the other hand, some carbohydrates that are produced by plants go into making protective covers for the plant's seeds. These are the fruits and initially contain starches. You're familiar with the taste of unripe, starchy, dry, green bananas, apples or peaches. Well, as they age, the starches break down to sugars and water is produced. The result? Luscious, ripe, juicy fruit! Eventually, the fruit softens and falls to the ground and the new seed is planted, surrounded with sugars loaded with energy for life. Therefore, it's impossible to eat a sugar-free diet if you eat any plant matter. And why would you want to? Sugar provides energy.

Q

WHEN A LABEL SAYS 'NO ADDED SUGAR', DOES THAT MEAN IT'S LOW IN SUGAR?

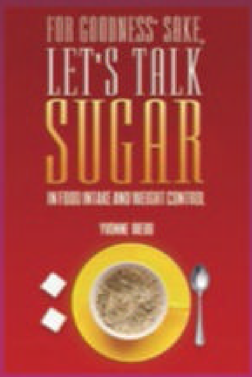
Not necessarily. Pear or apple pulp may have been added as sweeteners. Australia has a high production of pear pulp, which is used to dilute and extend the primary fruit in many fruit drinks. The pear component also helps to lower the supermarket price. Apple concentrate is also used in fruit drinks, sometimes as a sweetener or as a diluter of the primary juice. The apple is considered a better alternative to refined sugar – it does have some nutritive value.

So, the total sugar content may actually be raised. Remember, the label on the front of the item is 'marketing'. There are no rules, but the back label of ingredients and the nutrient analysis panel have regulations governing the information. So, compare the sugar content of your item of interest with a like item that doesn't proclaim 'no added sugar'. All will be revealed.

Alternatively, 'no added sugar' doesn't necessarily mean the product contains no, or little, sugar. For example, a pure orange fruit juice labelled 'no added sugar' may contain the equivalent sugar of three to six oranges in each glass.

KILOJOULES AND ENERGY – THEY'RE THE SAME!

If a food is low in kilojoules (calories), it has to be low in energy. And vice versa. Kilojoules and energy are the same thing. If you worry about your weight, you could opt for a low-kilojoule food. But would you buy a low-energy food? Probably not.



Extract from *For Goodness' Sake, Let's Talk Sugar In Food Intake and Weight Control* by Yvonne Webb (Austin Macauley, $28.55).

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

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Fitness

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Did you know?

Australians spend up to 80 per cent of their waking hours seated.

SOURCE: JOURNAL OF AGEING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Moving force

You might be someone who dutifully works out every day, but if you spend the rest of the day sitting around, you actually meet the definition of an 'active couch potato', says new research. According to a sweeping new study looking at how much people move and don't move, even after 30 minutes of daily exercise, you may still be at risk of a host of health problems if you're inactive for the majority of the day. The Finnish study looked at more than 3000 men and women who exercised daily but then sat for another 10 to 12 hours and found that their blood sugar, cholesterol and body fat were all elevated. However, the study also found that those who moved around a bit more, like going for a gentle walk, cleaning or even taking the stairs, were substantially healthier than those who didn't. So, here's your reminder to keep active throughout the day!

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

STRONG-MINDED

We know that muscles are for movement, but they also play a significant role in how you're feeling. The muscle-mood connection isn't entirely new, but it's becoming increasingly clear how effective exercise can be in helping to boost your wellbeing and also your brain. Active working muscles secrete tiny chemical messengers, called myokines, which have a powerful effect on organ function, including the brain. Thanks to these little guys, the muscle tissue talks directly with the brain, triggering a host of biological responses that improve memory, learning and mood. The best exercise to get your brain and muscles chatting? Resistance training! Think of it this way: you build muscle, you build brain.

40+

The age at which exercise increases hormones beneficial for slowing ageing. Did someone say time for a run?

SOURCE: SPORTS MEDICINE

Waterworks

Get that swimsuit handy... New clinical research has found that aquatic exercise may be even more beneficial for pain, sleep quality and mental state than previously thought, and, surprisingly, the positive effects from this type of activity lasted for a whole year. This is especially good news for people who suffer from chronic pain, such as back issues, and struggle or fear doing normal exercise because of it. The benefits of stepping into a pool are largely due to the buoyancy of it. Water lessens the pull of gravity on the spine and your muscles instantly work harder thanks to the natural resistance. So, make a splash this summer!

Front row

Indoor rowing machines aren't just for pro rowers. Data from Harvard Medical School suggests that a 30-minute vigorous workout on a rowing machine can blitz up to 1800kJ (for an 84kg person). In comparison, you'd have to walk briskly for more than an hour to expend the same amount of energy. You can pick one up for about $250 or look out for it at the gym.

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

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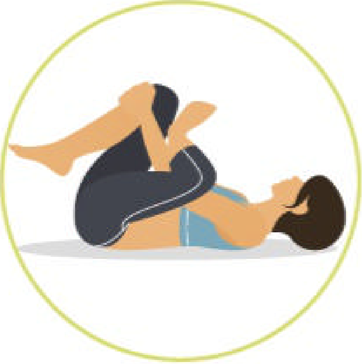
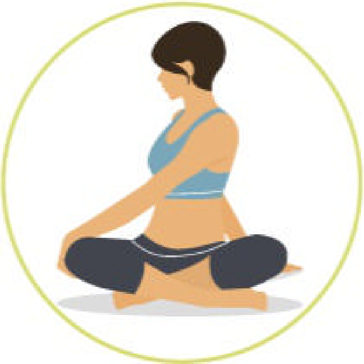
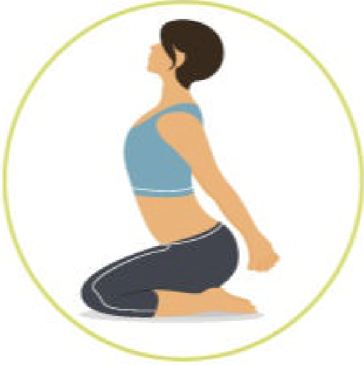
MOVE OF THE MONTH...

Q

HOW CAN I UNKINK MY BODY WHEN I FIRST WAKE UP?







A After lying in the same few positions overnight, it's natural to be stiff when you wake up. Morning stretching can increase circulation, help make your muscles more supple and trigger a feedback loop between your muscles and your nervous system that signals your muscles to relax, says trainer Autumn Calabrese. "The result is less stiffness and greater ease of movement," she adds. Here are a few effective – and feel-good – morning stretches to try today, and you can do them right in bed!

Figure-four stretch

1. Lie on your back with legs bent and your feet flat on the bed or the floor.

2. Keeping your left foot flexed, cross your left ankle over your right thigh just above your knee.

3. Interlace fingers behind right thigh and gently pull your right knee toward your chest until you feel a deep stretch in your glute.

4. Hold the stretch for 30 to 60 seconds, then repeat with your other leg.

Seated spinal twist

1. Sit cross-legged on your bed or on the floor with one leg folded in front of the other and your back nice and straight.

2. With your core engaged, bring your left hand to your right knee and rotate your torso (twist from the base) to the right and place your right hand on the bed or floor behind you.

3. Hold the stretch for 30 to 60 seconds; switch sides and repeat.

Chest stretch

1. Kneel upright on the bed or floor, or stand tall on the floor with your feet hip-width apart.

2. Relax your shoulders and interlace your fingers behind you, holding them away from your body until you feel your chest stretch.

3. Squeeze your shoulder blades together as you lift your chest and pull your hands back and down.

4. Hold the stretch for 30 to 60 seconds.

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF GOOD HOUSEKEEPING US. ILLUSTRATIONS: ISTOCK

Sunny side up

Whether you're on the beach or on a summer stroll, these pieces will have you looking as good as you feel.

BIG ON STYLE These luxe, full-cotton beach towels are extra large in size *and* comfort. **Isla In Bloom Lucia Olive Beach Towel, $99.95, islainbloom.com.au**

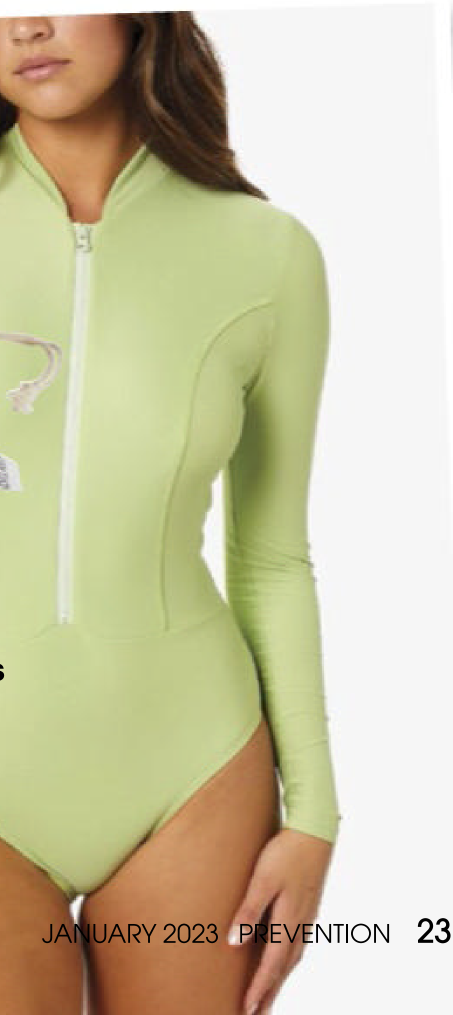
V FOR VARIETY The perfect high-waisted tights for lunging, brunching or lounging. Plus, it has pockets! **Bondi Active Graffiti V-Shaped Tights, $85, bondiactive.com**

ALL EARS The nano-ceramic coating will keep these earrings protected from the elements. **EL&RO Lauve Hoops in Gold, $99, elrojewellery.com.au**

FINE PRINT Made from super-soft fabric that's breathable and quick drying, you won't want to take this bralette off. **Loulu Ballet Bra Kiwi Palm, $79.99, theupside.com.au**

TOP PROTECTION Made from 100 per cent recycled polyester, this tee guards from the sun while also keeping you cool and dry. **Kathmandu SUN-Stopper T-shirt, $79.98, kathmandu.com.au**

WATCH THIS! Manage your life in style all from your wrist. **Google Pixel Watch, from $549, store.google.com/au**



LIME ACTION Made from sustainable fabric, this suit is ideal for movement. **Project Blank Paddle Suit Sage, $89.95, theiconic.com.au**

BUCKETS OF STYLE Get both sun smart and street cred with this pure cotton corduroy hat. **Bondi Active Bucket Hat, $25, bondiactive.com**

COVER STAR You'll be the envy of the beach under this gorgeous umbrella. Comes with matching carry bag. **Kollab Beach Umbrella Fleur Floral, $199.95, kollab.com.au**

CARRY ON Keep all your essentials handy (and safe) in this water-resistant bag. **Kollab Beach Bag Banana Palm, $29.95, kollab.com.au**

DIVE IN This retro dive mask is the ideal way to immerse yourself in the beauty of the ocean. **Gentle Habits Dive Mask, $59.99, gentlehabits.com.au**

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Health

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Off the scale

Want to keep your brain super sharp? Then eat those omega-3s! New evidence suggests that consuming fish, such as tuna, salmon, sardines and cod, and other sources of omega-3 fatty acids, such as seeds and nuts, several times a week may help preserve brain health and cognitive function in midlife. And while this is not entirely new news (it's known that omega-3 has a protective effect in old age), this recent US study of 2000 people found that having regular omega-3 foods is associated with better brain structure and cognitive function in people in their 40s and 50s. If you have a diet that includes plenty of omega-3 fatty acids, you're already protecting your brain, but, if not, it's time to make a regular date with the powerful fatty acid.

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

5 MINUTES MORE,
(please)

HOLDING ITS WEIGHT

Weighted blankets might seem like a bit of a fad, but there's scientific evidence that supports the theory that they can be beneficial for those with sleep issues due to insomnia, ADHD and autism. New Swedish research has found that sleeping with a weighted blanket may boost the amount of melatonin that's naturally produced in the body by up to 30 per cent. The study, published in the *Journal of Sleep Research*, also noted that there was no effect on the amount of cortisol or oxytocin in the body, so claims relating to stress and wellbeing aren't substantiated. But, if you're someone who struggles to fall asleep – and stay asleep – then a weighted blanket may be just what you need.

Call to arms

Next time you get your blood pressure checked, put forth both arms. A study of more than 53,000 people, published in the journal *Hypertension*, found that many cases of hypertension and risk of heart disease were missed, but would've been detected if blood pressure was measured in both arms.

10-15%

The percentage of weight that can be lost in 16 weeks, thanks to a new non-surgical weight loss device called the Allurion Gastric Balloon.

SOURCE: ALLURION

So, how does it work?

The Allurion Gastric Balloon is the world's first medical weight loss device that requires no surgery. It works like this: You swallow a large tablet containing the deflated balloon with a catheter, which is then filled with a saline solution upon entering the stomach (it inflates to the size of a grapefruit). As a result, you feel full on much less food, accelerating weight loss. After about 16 weeks, the balloon automatically deflates by itself and passes naturally through the body. This very clever hi-tech solution is currently only offered to overweight patients with a BMI of more than 27. And patients also receive dietary and lifestyle support to help the weight loss last. Find out more at allurion.com/en

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

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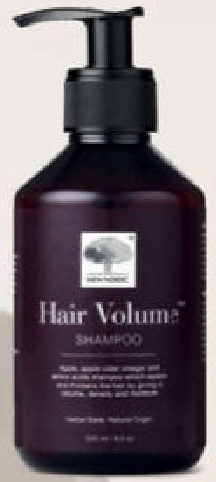
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9/10 women felt their hair was healthier, thicker and shinier after taking Hair Volume™ tablets.

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I have always dreamed of beautiful thick-looking hair!

Annette, 47, has always been conscious about her thin hair. She used hair extensions to make her hair appear to have more volume. When her hair began to break and start falling out, she became desperate. "I looked for help at the hairdresser and at the health store. They recommended Hair Volume™ and now I don't dare stop."

For many years, I have been in a constant search for help. I was upset about my hair thinning and dreamed of beautiful thick and shiny-looking hair. I have tried everything as well as seeking help from my hairdresser, but when the hair started breaking, I became really desperate.

Hair Volume™ tablets were recommended to me

In my local health food store, I was recommended Hair Volume™ from New Nordic, as, among other things, it contains apple extract. I was recommended to use the tablets for a minimum of 3 months. I went home full of expectation.

Losing my hair is in the past

My skin was the first thing I noticed. It's a great extra benefit of the tablets. There was a nicer glow to my skin. My husband was the first to comment on my hair. He could clearly see that I had a lot of new hair growth. My hair is much more shiny and I don't dare stop taking my Hair Volume™ tablets, Annette says happily.

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Painful truth

Studies show that we not only experience and manage pain differently than men, but our suffering is often ignored, too.

MEN

HIS THRESHOLD **IS HIGHER**

Even when they have the same ailments as women, men report their pain levels to be about 20 per cent lower. That's not just macho talk; scientists think sex hormones play a part. Some women with chronic pain say their symptoms get worse during certain phases of their menstrual cycles.

Men freak out more about it

When they know pain is coming, they may be at a loss as to what to do about it, says pain expert Dr Roger Fillingim. Men who know they're in for a good wallop have greater activity in the part of the brain that experiences fear, which could make those twinges worse.

HIS DOCTOR DOESN'T THINK HE'LL SPEAK UP ABOUT IT

Lots of men play it strong and silent at the doc. (And that's if they even go – about 24 per cent haven't seen a doctor in the past year.) So, when a man admits to feeling pain, the problem may be seen as urgent and more time is spent trying to treat it, says neuroscientist and pain researcher Professor Jeffrey Mogil.

WOMEN

SHE GETS **MORE THAN HER FAIR SHARE, THOUGH**

Our pain threshold increases during childbirth, but that protective effect is temporary: Women are more likely to suffer from persistent conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome and osteoarthritis. Then there's also menstrual cramps and endometriosis.

Women *start coping* before they even feel a thing

When we think about a potentially ouch-y experience, we show more activity in the planning part of the brain. Women often use more approaches for managing the pain, such as seeking social support, talking themselves through it and taking steps to avoid it.

HER DOCTOR THINKS SHE'S JUST EXAGGERATING

In a study of emergency department patients with abdominal pain, women were 25 per cent less likely to be given painkiller medication (analgesics) and waited longer for the drugs. Why the gender bias? Some docs think we're being drama queens; others assume we can handle it because we tolerate childbirth.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Stressed?

Try HIVITA, Hi On Life!

If you are low on vitamins and minerals, it may be the reason for low energy, weak immune system, stress and tiredness, brittle nails and thinning hair.

It is true, in ideal circumstances healthy food, regular exercise and adequate sleep are sufficient for well-being. However, the real world is not ideal. Life is more demanding, and food is no longer as wholesome as it used to be, due to processing and exposure to pesticides and herbicides (toxic chemicals used in modern farming).

Clear evidence

Processed food, higher levels of stress and pollutants place greater demand on our mind and body. At times you may even eat wholesome foods, yet a poor digestive system or absorption disorders may prevent vital nutrients from being absorbed into your bloodstream to deliver the desired benefits. So even when you're doing everything right, you could still be low on important vitamins and minerals. The result? Weakened immune system, low energy levels, thinning hair and brittle nails. Research shows long term nutritional deficiencies can compromise your health.

HIVITA WELLNESS Women's and Men's vitamin and mineral supplements promote a healthy mind and body. When taken daily, you may feel the difference in better coping mechanisms and increased energy in the first week. Healthier hair and nails can take a few weeks to rebuild.

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What's up with...

itchy armpits?

It's the second-most embarrassing spot to scratch yourself in public, yet it's quite common. Here's why your underarms can get so uncomfortable.

BY KAYLA BLANTON

It might hit you just when you're feeling confident in your favourite sleeveless dress or swimsuit: the skin-crawling urge to scratch, monkey style. On top of being prone to sweating and chafing, the armpit and axilla (the space on your side just below the underarm) are full of nerve endings, explains dermatologist Dr Ava Shamban. "Even a minor disruption to the skin can feel irritating," she says.

WHY SO ITCHY?

The most common cause of itchy armpits is contact dermatitis. This happens when a substance, such as deodorant, fragrance or detergent, irritates your skin; the natural friction from moving your arm exacerbates the reaction, and the itch can spread. Other causes include:

- **HEAT RASH** When your sweat ducts don't have the opportunity to 'breathe', they trap perspiration beneath the skin, which may create lumps, bumps and blisters that can get irritated from the arm's natural movement.
- **FUNGAL OR BACTERIAL INFECTION** The armpit's dark, damp environment encourages overgrowth of normal skin flora, creating an ideal setting for infectious yeasts to grow, Dr Shamban says. "Those who have hyperhidrosis, or excessive sweating, are more likely to experience this," she adds.
- **INGROWN HAIRS** Usually centralised to the hair follicle, ingrown hairs happen "when the tip of a hair grows sideways or curls back into the follicle, never breaking through the opening," explains Dr Shamban. The lesions can subsequently become itchy, red and inflamed.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

In some cases, persistent armpit itching can be a sign of something more serious, including breast cancer. If it's accompanied by intense pain, rash, swelling, warming of the breast or colour changes, see a doctor right away.

How to GET RELIEF

To prevent itching in the first place, keep your underarms clean and dry. Dr Shamban recommends using a non-talc powder and an antiperspirant, applied morning and night; if you need something stronger, ask your doctor about prescription underarm wipes. You can also use an exfoliating toner to keep bacteria at bay. In extreme conditions, sometimes Botox injections or a miraDry, a treatment that destroys sweat glands, can decrease sweat production.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CATHLEEN ABERS-KIMBALL

Overdid it?

Whether you overindulged in food, exercise or the summer sun, we'll get you back on track.

BY LINDA FORMICHELLI

The festive season is meant to be enjoyed to the fullest, which makes it really easy to tip into 'too much' territory. From downing more bubbly than was wise to stressing out over your full-on calendar, this guide will help you slip back into that healthy groove and feel better fast – and also show you how to do better next time!

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES; ISTOCK

Kit Kat
Nestlé
Have a break, have a Kit Kat
Lion Mini

You overdid it with...

WINE AND SPIRITS

There were a lot of toasts and you're not sure how much you actually drank.

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF... you are parched, have a pounding headache, or are sensitive to sound and light. You may also be irritable, tired and achy and have loose stools. No one knows exactly what causes hangovers, but one hypothesis is that alcohol leads the liver and brain to release inflammatory chemicals.

HOW TO FEEL BETTER Unfortunately, you can't stop a hangover with any of the supplements you see being hyped, says Dr Robert M Swift, a professor of behavioural and social sciences. But you can treat each symptom as needed. Get sunlight to wake yourself up, drink fluids with electrolytes to battle dehydration and take ibuprofen, or aspirin, for the headache. Bland foods, like dry toast, can help with queasiness.

NEXT TIME Keep it light. Darker-coloured drinks, such as brandy, rum, whisky, stout and red wine, have more congeners, chemicals that can contribute to hangovers. Also, try not to swill on an empty stomach such that all the alcohol hits your system at once. The best way to prevent a hangover is to consume less. So, if you're partying, try pacing yourself by alternating one glass of alcohol with one glass of water.

You overdid it with...

FOOD

All those luscious desserts on the buffet were just begging to be sampled!

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF... you feel bloated, queasy or gassy or have heartburn. This is like a traffic jam at peak hour – when large amounts of food enter the stomach all at once, your digestive tract gets overwhelmed and slows down, leading to issues.

HOW TO FEEL BETTER We all overeat sometimes. Don't beat yourself up, and don't starve yourself the next day. Instead, let go of guilt and treat your body with kindness by addressing symptoms, says Dr Jennifer Wider, an expert on women's health. Mild exercise, like walking, can also jump-start digestion. To dull discomfort, look for remedies with at least one of these ingredients: calcium carbonate, aluminium hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or sodium bicarbonate. If you're prone to heartburn, sleep with your upper body propped up to keep stomach acid where it belongs, or try lying on your left side, which can ease heartburn and help release gas. And it's true that peppermint tea may help alleviate stomach discomfort, but it can also worsen heartburn. So, if reflux is a problem for you, take small sips of water instead.

NEXT TIME At a party, try positioning yourself out of sight of the food table and be mindful of portion sizes. Sure, you want to taste the pavlova and the tart and the chocolate cake, but, instead of placing entire portions on your plate, see if you can serve yourself just enough to savour the flavour. Research supports the idea that the pleasure you get from eating a delicious food shrinks with each additional bite you take. ►

> However pumped up you may feel to push yourself to the limit, only increase exercise intensity in small increments.

You overdid it with...

THE SUN

"Seriously, I was sitting in the shade for just a few minutes!"

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF... you have the telltale pain, heat and itchiness of sunburn, and your skin is almost tomato red. Beyond not feeling great, you already know that sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer and can make skin look older faster.

HOW TO FEEL BETTER

Try cool compresses or a cool bath to alleviate discomfort. Two other options to try: hydrocortisone cream can help quell inflammation, or, if it's quite severe, ibuprofen can help relieve the pain.

NEXT TIME Whether it's tree shade or a shade cloth, tiny UV light can still penetrate. And sunburn can start within just 15 minutes. You know the drill: slather on sunscreen before going outside, even when it's overcast or you're in the shade, and reapply it every two hours. Spray and brush-on sunscreens that sit comfortably on top of make-up are also available. Dermatologist Dr Alina Bridges suggests adding antioxidant supplements that contain polypodium leucotomos (plant) extract and nicotinamide to your daily regimen because they help fight long-term skin damage from sun exposure.

You overdid it with...

EXERCISE

You did a hard boot camp class yesterday, or maybe you suddenly started training to run a 5K.

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF... it's not just a little soreness (that's normal after an intense workout, because exercise causes microscopic tears in muscle fibres which, while painful, is a natural part of the muscle strengthening process). Severe soreness and stiffness, or aches that don't ease after three days, are a signal you need to dial it back, says personal trainer Jacque Crockford. Another sign you've gone OTT: The pain is sharp or occurs during or right after exercise (normal soreness may appear 12 to 24 hours later).

HOW TO FEEL BETTER

Nothing will make post-exercise soreness go away sooner, but gentle movement like yoga and walking may ease it. A bath in Epsom salts, which is rich in magnesium, can also ease the pain. Getting a massage and drinking water can promote circulation and healing, says Jacque.

NEXT TIME Warm up with jumping jacks or lunges, and cool down with stretches; five to 10 minutes on either side of your sweat session should do the trick. And however pumped up you may feel to push yourself to the limit on a given day, only increase exercise intensity in small increments. Applying heat right away may decrease aches later on, too.

You overdid it with…
CAFFEINE

That double espresso got you going, and another powered you through those afternoon meetings. Oh, and then there was one more to prime you for an after-work dinner with friends.

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF… you've got tummy trouble. Too much caffeine can lead to diarrhoea and anxiety because it is a stimulant that affects the central nervous system, explains dietitian Beth Warren. Your head may also be throbbing (caffeine causes blood vessel changes that can trigger headaches). Finally, you might have trouble falling and staying asleep.

HOW TO FEEL BETTER

You may see activated charcoal touted online as a speedy way to remove caffeine from your system, but don't go there: it leaches vitamins and minerals from your body. Caffeine's effect should wear off naturally in four to six hours; until then, Beth suggests taking a walk or practising breathing meditation. Also, drink water to rehydrate, as caffeine is a diuretic.

NEXT TIME Switch to decaf. Everyone reacts differently, but Food Standards Australia NZ says 400mg of caffeine (the amount in four or five cups of coffee) is the recommended maximum. Still, if you see negative effects from drinking any amount, cut back.

You overdid it with…
YOUR SCHEDULE

Work parties, friend and social club get-togethers, family celebrations, shopping, prepping for home entertaining… enough already!

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF… you catch yourself repeating "I have so much on my plate!" or don't have time for self-care or activities you enjoy. You may also have stress-induced fatigue, muscle tension or an upset stomach.

HOW TO FEEL BETTER

We're not robots – we all need time to chill. Good news: It's never too late to say no, says life and career coach Kristin Taliaferro. Cancel nonessential obligations – are you really the only one who organises every aspect of these activities? Can friends or family help? Then allow yourself essential 'me' time. "Jot down and hang up a list of 10 to 20 ways to recharge so they're front and centre," says Kristin. "Go for a walk, exercise, read, take a bath or listen to music." And if those feel like too much, cancel! Self-care shouldn't feel like more work.

NEXT TIME Think about why you're so busy. Maybe you don't want to disappoint people, or you're taking on too much to avoid something else. Perhaps your family and work colleagues aren't pulling their weight and it feels easier to just do things yourself. "If you want to help others, take care of yourself so you can give joyfully rather than dipping into your reserves and ending up bitter," Kristin says. **P**

SMASHING health myths

It can be hard to get certain persistent misconceptions out of our thick skulls. So, the next time you hear one of these untruths, jump in and healthsplain.

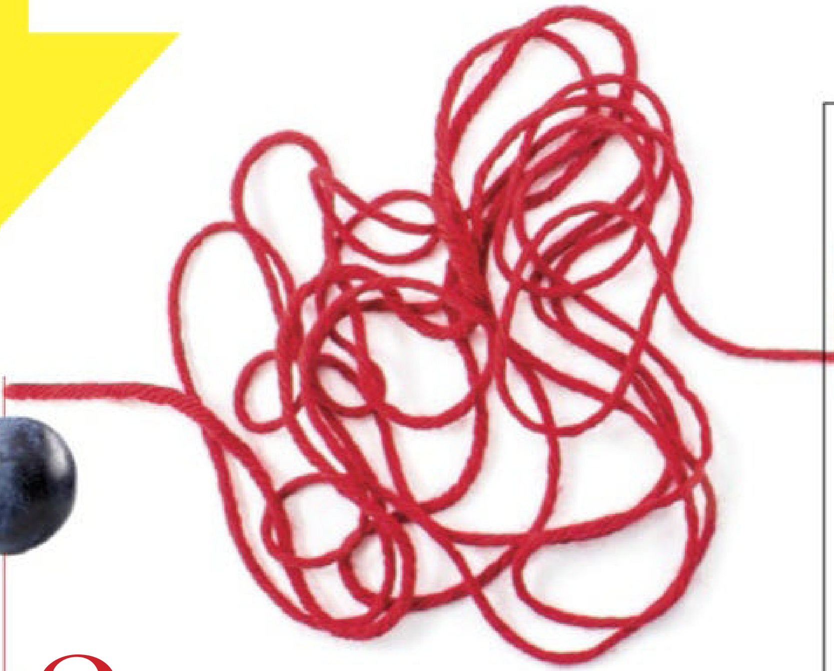
BY KATE ROCKWOOD

Knowing what's true or not can help you stay healthy for real. Let's put a wrecking ball through some prevailing myths.

1

Myth You don't have to wash organic produce, because it's already free of pesticides.

Truth You should always rinse produce, organic or not, unless it's packaged and the label says 'prewashed'. "It's more about there being dirt on it than pesticides," says food safety expert Peter Cassell. Some fruits and vegies trap soil in nooks and crannies as they grow, and produce may pick up bacteria from people handling it before you bring it home. You should wash produce even if you aren't eating the skin, as cutting or peeling can transfer germs to the part you eat.



2

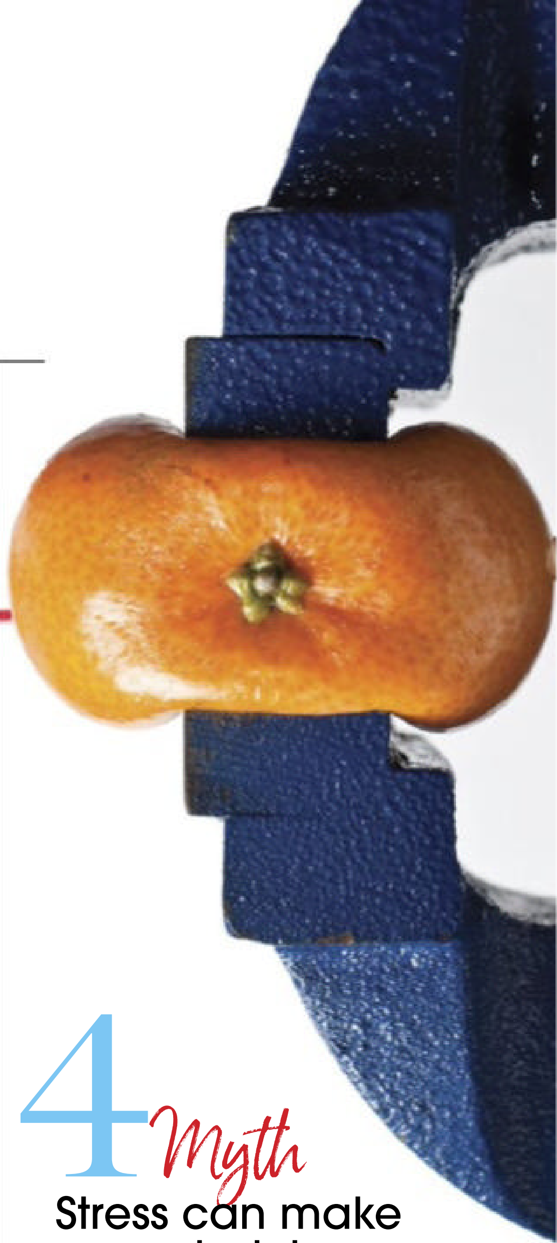
MYTH Crossing your legs causes varicose veins.

TRUTH It's not your sitting style that puts you at higher risk, but how long you sit. Bulging varicose veins and red spider veins pop up when valves in legs get damaged and blood flows back from deeper veins to more superficial ones, says dermatologist Dr Paul Friedman, and "the superficial veins bulge with all the pooled blood and become visible through the skin." Sitting for hours at a time, cross-legged or not, causes valve damage, and there are other risk factors beyond your control. Women are about twice as likely as men to have these visible veins, and one study found that the risk of developing varicose veins was more than 60 per cent for women when one parent had them. To control what you can, take frequent standing breaks, be mindful of weight gain (it may add pressure on your veins) and don't smoke.

3

MYTH Sore from exercise? You should always rest.

TRUTH Achy muscles aren't a signal to sit on your couch all day – some soreness is normal. Try a leisurely walk or gentle yoga to keep the blood flowing. To minimise soreness, avoid working out the same muscles on back-to-back days. Alternating ice and heat can also help, says sports scientist Dr Michele Scharff Olson. An exception: Sharp, persistent pain could be the sign of an injury, so if that's what you're feeling, skip the workout and rest. If the pain stays around longer than a couple of days, call your doctor.



4

Myth Stress can make your hair turn grey overnight.

Truth That's just in the movies. Sudden onset of intense stress (such as a death, a major surgery or a serious illness) can damage the melanocyte cells that produce hair pigment, bringing in greys. But those cells are located deep beneath the scalp, so the resulting grey would take months to become visible, says dermatologist Dr Adam Friedman. Also, certain conditions, such as hypothyroidism and deficiencies in vitamin B12 or copper, may compound stress-induced greying. **P**

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

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Beauty

FAST, EASY WAYS TO LOOK AS GOOD AS YOU FEEL

Bottle green

As awareness grows around environmental impacts and harmful chemicals, sustainability is becoming the driving force behind many of the new scents released today, says Michael Marzano, national education manager at fragrance distribution company Agence de Parfum. "It includes everything from ethical acquisition of ingredients and farming methods to packaging options with a drive toward refillable, recyclable materials," he explains. The basic ingredients in popular scents, and the iconic bottles they come in, are also under the spotlight. "The EU is even introducing legislation banning chemical fillers, petrochemical plastics and paraffin wax by 2025."

Look for trending natural ingredients like vanilla, cacao, sandalwood and saffron, says Michael. Meanwhile, the scents below will ensure you smell as good as you feel.

MAISON TAHITE VANILLADE EAU DE PARFUM An exquisite blend of warm and spicy amber, vanilla, musks, sweet flowers and citrus in a sustainable glass bottle, and a seed-infused box that, once planted, will bloom. **$239, libertineparfumerie.com.au**

BETTER OCEAN WILD EAU DE FRAICHE MIST With sustainable, refillable packaging and chemical-free scents full of native botanicals, this blend of coconut water, saffron, ginger and sea salt is fresh as a summer breeze. **$66, thebetterbrand.com.au**

GOLDFIELD & BANKS SUNSET HOUR PERFUME Sustainably sourced Aussie botanicals meet French perfumery in this elixir of spicy, citrusy delights containing green mango, sandalwood and ginger with a musk vanilla base. **$165, adorebeauty.com.au**

WORDS: CECILY-ANNA BENNETT PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

Laser pointer

Laser treatment can deliver everything from smoother skin to faded pigmentation, but it can also help with hair loss, which affects 49 per cent of women at some point in their life. Called low level laser therapy (LLLT), it's like a futuristic cap (such as the Current Body CapillusPro Hair Regrowth Laser Cap, $2998, currentbody.com.au) that penetrates the hair follicles with photons of light, which, once absorbed by the cells, delivers more nutrients to the follicles. There are several ways to treat hair loss, from topical products and supplements to trichologist support, but it's nice knowing you have options to bring your hair back to its best.

$50 million

The amount of money Aussies have spent on dry shampoo in the past 12 months, according to Batiste.

Ingredient alert:

ALPHA ARBUTIN

This antioxidant can lighten pigmentation, improve the appearance of age spots and fade inflammatory discolouration. Considered a natural alternative to hydroquinone for skin brightening, it's just been approved by the TGA for use in Australia, so expect to see it popping up more frequently. **Find it in:** The Ordinary Alpha Arbutin 2% + HA Serum, $14.90, adorebeauty.com.au

Head for cover

Another reason for sun protection: Researchers have found one of the most fatal melanomas occur on the scalp, often diagnosed later because it's concealed by hair. So, always wear a hat or apply a sunscreen formulated for hair and scalp, such as **Sun Bum Scalp & Hair Mist SPF 30, $21.99, Priceline**, which will protect your head without making hair crunchy or greasy.

WORDS: CECILY-ANNA BENNETT. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

Got it covered

These premium sunscreen formulas do double duty as next-level skincare.

BY CECILY-ANNA BENNETT

1. ASAP SPF 50+ HYDRATING DEFENCE A hydrating primer and moisturiser with SPF 50+ protection. **$75, adorebeauty.com.au** **2. BONDI SANDS SUNNY DAZE HYDRATING SPF 50 MOISTURISER** Enriched with vitamin E, hibiscus sabdariffa fruit extract and zinc oxide for calm, hydrated skin. **$22.95, Chemist Warehouse** **3. JOHN PLUNKETT'S SUPERFADE SUPER SCREEN SPF 50+** Aloe vera and vitamin E work together in this moisturising formula. **$29.95, plunketts.com.au** **4. WE ARE FEEL GOOD WILD ROSELLA SUNSCREEN LOTION SPF 50+** Containing ingredients from local hibiscus, this sweet-smelling lotion will leave skin hydrated. **$32.95, wearefeelgoodinc.com.au** **5. QUICK FLICK QUICK SCREEN SPF 50+** A 3-in-1 make-up setting spray, hydrating mist and SPF 50+ in a non-greasy formula containing vegan squalane. **$44.99, thequickflick.com.au** **6. ASPECT SUN SPF 50+ CC CREAM** This subtle tint, infused with antioxidants, will even your skin tone beautifully. **$59, adorebeauty.com.au** **7. AIRY DAY SPF 50+ GOLDEN GLOW** Give skin a luminous glow with this silky, blendable SPF 50+ containing vitamins, vegan collagen and blue light protection. **$46.95, airyday.co** **8. LA ROCHE-POSAY ANTHELIOS SPF 50+ INVISIBLE SPRAY** Your whole body will love this cool, lightweight spritz that's suitable for sensitive skin. **$39.99, Priceline** **9. MESOESTETIC MESOPROTECH SUN STICK SPF 50+** Infused with rosehip seed oil, this lab-tested stick is perfect for delicate skin around eyes and mouth. **$59, adorebeauty.com.au**

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

How to wear a red lip

A bright lip done the correct way can really add energy and confidence to your look, says make-up artist Melanie Burnicle.

Before I show you how to do it, knowing the answers to these quick questions below can really help with your application technique and give your powerhouse red lip great staying power.

1 DO YOU HAVE FINE LINES AROUND YOUR LIPS?

If you do, use a silicone primer before applying your make-up.

2 WHAT'S THE TEXTURE OF SKIN ON YOUR LIPS (DRY OR HYDRATED)?

If lips are a little flaky, give them a light scrub with a baby toothbrush and a gentle exfoliant and moisturise several hours beforehand.

3 DO YOU HAVE A HAIRY TOP LIP?

If you want a sharp red lip look, you can gently razor the hair around the upper and lower lip (with a dedicated facial hair dermaplane). I don't do it all the time, just when I'm doing a close-up bright lip for camera or at an event!

HOW TO MASTER

... a sharp bold lip

Ensure the lips are prepped well (see question 2, left), then, using a pencil, shape the outside of the lip. As you age, the outer points of your lip sit lower and a little heavier (thanks, gravity), so, to avoid exaggerating this, avoid following the natural lip line into the outer corners of the lips and cut the line in a little tighter. This creates the illusion of a more uplifted lip. Fill in the entire lip with lip pencil and then apply your lipstick either straight from the tube or using a lip brush. If you've made a mistake, use a little bit of foundation or concealer around the outside edge and create beautiful sharp, clean lines.

... a softer red lip

If you want the bright colour but a softer shape, it's easy! Simply apply the lipstick gently without creating a strong lip line. You can even pat your fingertip on the lipstick and then onto the lips. P

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

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Sizing up SKINCARE

From the right order to layer products to the ingredients to look out for, we have all the answers you need to help you look fresher faced.

BY INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN

Q What’s the right order to layer skincare products?

A The rule of thumb here is all about texture: you should go from thin to thick. That’s because the heavier a product is, the more it’s designed to form a seal that won’t let other products penetrate. If you use a liquid toner (either a hydrating or an exfoliating acid one) or an essence, this goes on first after cleansing, followed by your viscous liquid-textured serum.

If you use more than one serum, those with anti-ageing ingredients (vitamin C, niacinamide) or exfoliating ones (salicylic acid, PHAs) go on first, followed by hydrating ones based on hyaluronic acid, as these can create a seal on the skin’s surface. Eye creams are best dabbed on after this, before applying moisturiser. If you want to use a face oil and a moisturiser, apply the oil first. Sunscreen is always the last product to apply before make-up. Does your foundation have an SPF? You should still use an SPF lotion under it for complete protection.

ADDITIONAL WORDS: CECILY-ANNA BENNETT. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES; ISTOCK

Q Do I need a serum?

A Serums are a good idea. In the simplest terms, a deep-penetrating, watery-textured serum is your problem solver: it can push back on pigmentation and wrinkles or settle redness or breakouts. A creamy moisturiser, meanwhile, is mostly designed to stay on the surface to seal in moisture and reinforce the lipid barrier for healthy, well-functioning skin. For an effective daytime regimen of just two products, choose a serum with active ingredients that focuses on your main concerns – for example, L-ascorbic acid (a form of vitamin C) and antioxidants if you don’t like your brown spots and fine lines; azelaic acid for redness; and salicylic acid and niacinamide if you’re battling acne – and top with a broad-spectrum sunscreen with moisturising benefits to function as your day cream.

TRY **The Ordinary Niacinamide 10% + Zinc 1%, $10.60, adorebeauty.com.au** is enriched with vitamins and minerals to transform the texture of uneven skin and banish blemishes. **Fresh Tea Elixir Skin Resilience Activating Serum, from $122, sephora.com.au** is packed full of niacinamide, hyaluronic acid and antioxidant protection derived from green tea. **Douglas Pereira Antioxidant Serum, $165, dpskinhealth.com** is a protective daily serum powered with skin-renewing peptides, potent antioxidants, anti-inflammatories and Natural Moisturising Factors, which help to maintain hydration and skin elasticity.

Q Should my moisturiser have an SPF?

A Yes, your daily moisturiser should have SPF 50+ broad-spectrum protection, even in the winter. Up to 90 per cent of skin ageing is from the sun – mainly UVA light, which is present all year. Invest in one of the many new daily sunscreens with skincare benefits, rather than a moisturiser with low-level SPF as an afterthought. The former now boast lovely textures for every skin type and are packed with additional age-defying ingredients such as antioxidants, ceramides and niacinamide. (Note: Not just an oil balancer, niacinamide is a barrier booster, skin brightener, wrinkle fighter and soother as well.) At night, use an SPF-free moisturiser or serum with anti-ageing vitamin A (aka retinol/retinal – we explain the difference over the page).

TRY **Natio Rosewater Hydration Moisture Balance Day Cream SPF 50+, $19.95, natio.com.au** is great for all skin types and is enriched with soothing rose water, aloe and sun protection. **CeraVe Skin Renewing Retinol Serum, $41.99, Chemist Warehouse** is perfect at bedtime (or for everyday use) and contains three essential ceramides to support the skin’s moisture barrier. ►

Q
Which skincare ingredients don't mix well?

A Actually, the vast majority of skincare is formulated to work safely alongside other products, whether it's from the same brand or not. It's nonsense, for example, that layering vitamin C and niacinamide creates irritating nicotinic acid, to name one popular myth. The two actually work well together to fight pigmentation. What you don't want to do is overdose on powerful ingredients, in the same way that you don't want to mix chilli sauce with horseradish! So, while strong exfoliating acids and retinol can work in a complementary way, they both aim to speed up the rate at which you shed skin cells, so using them together can become too much for skin to handle. With any new ingredient, start slowly, build up and don't introduce another until you're sure your skin can cope.

As for ingredients and products that are best not teamed because they render one another inefficient, yes, there are a few. Probiotics don't mix with the mineral sunscreen zinc oxide because it has antibacterial properties that kill the good bacteria. Products with high levels of alcohol or preservatives pose the same problem. AHAs, such as lactic and glycolic acid, will destabilise L-ascorbic acid, so these should be kept apart. As far as textures that don't work together go, that's a pilling issue. More about that on the opposite page.

Q What's the difference between retinol and retinal – and which is best?

A Both members of the retinoid (vitamin A) family, these are 'cell communicating ingredients' that normalise skin cell function, so the cells act like healthier, younger versions of themselves. The results are wide-ranging: fewer wrinkles, fading pigmentation, more radiance and reduced acne and oiliness.

Retinol is the one with decades of clinical research behind it, but retinal appears to work faster and cause less irritation and skin flaking. The latter fact is mostly down to the ingredient requiring 'encapsulation' in protective bubbles inside sophisticated skincare formulas, on account of it being so unstable it'd oxidise (go off) otherwise. The happy side effect is that it gets released slowly inside the skin, preventing a sudden spike of potent but inflammation-inducing active ingredient. Retinal is also antibacterial, while retinol isn't. Added to the sebum-regulating and dead cell-dislodging properties it has in common with retinol, this makes retinal the winner in the breakout-busting stakes. Although retinal formulas tend to be more expensive, they're the better option if your skin is sensitive or easily irritated, and worth trying if you just don't get on with retinol.

TRY Trinny London Overnight Sensation Retinal+ Serum, $130, trinnylondon.com/au is cushioned with skin-soothing fatty acids to further reduce potential irritation. **AHC Youth Focus Pro Retinal Essence, $79, Priceline** is perfect for those with combination or oily skin; you'll love the weightless texture. **Synergie Skin Ultimate A, $139, synergieskin.com** uses a stable, non-irritating form of vitamin A to even skin tone and help reverse sun damage.

Q Whenever I apply foundation over my skincare, it pills. How can I stop this?

A Pilling, or balling, happens for two reasons: either one or more products can't absorb into the skin, or ingredients repel one another. It's all about specific combinations that don't mix, but the main culprits for pilling are silicones, mineral sunscreens and hyaluronic acid.

The first thing to do is leave more time between your serum, moisturiser and foundation to allow each layer to sink in for a few minutes. Rich balms or creams featuring ingredients like shea butter need even longer. Try to apply less of each formula and limit the number of products you layer. No luck? Look at the ingredient list. First of all, serums high in hyaluronic acid often form an invisible layer on the skin. Rub a face oil or rich cream on top, or a lotion with powders suspended in it (such as mineral sunscreens and foundations rich in mica, iron oxides or mineral pigments), and the lot will come right back off in little grey balls. Choose a glycerine-based serum instead, such as Paula's Choice Calm Repairing Serum, $53, paulaschoice.com.au, or one with 'low molecular weight' hyaluronic acid (we like Boost Lab 2D-Hyaluronic Hydro Boost Serum, $29.95, boostlabco.com), as these sink in much better.

> If you use a serum and face oil, one pill-preventing trick is to press the oil into your skin instead of massaging it in.

Q Should I use menopause-specific skincare?

A You can if you like, but finding the right 'system' for your skin can be frustrating. One good 'meno' skincare range that does straddle that for you, however, is the well-thought-out Prai M Meno-Soothe Range (itvsn.com.au). But, if you want to do your own balancing act, you can. Look for products that avoid irritants (no fragrance, alcohol or sulphates) and major on skin barrier-boosting and anti-inflammatory ingredients, such as niacinamide, ceramides, essential fatty acids, probiotics and vitamin E. To fight the signs of ageing, swap out your proven cell-turnover stimulators for gentler ones. That means retinal or peptides instead of retinol, THD ascorbate (an oily form of vitamin C) instead of L-ascorbic acid (the potent, stingy form of vitamin C) and polyhydroxy acids (PHAs) to exfoliate instead of glycolic acid.

TRY Vital Momentum Firm Anti-Wrinkle Firming Serum, $77, vitalmomentum.com addresses collagen depletion, barrier repair and the need for light but quenching textures. **Olay Regenerist Antioxidant Vitamin B3, C, E Moisturiser, $59.99, Chemist Warehouse** is a powerhouse of antioxidants and hydrators in a nourishing, comforting cream. **Clarins Super Restorative Day Cream, $149, and Night Cream, $159, adorebeauty.com.au** have been updated to include gorse and harungana extracts – the latter has retinol-like actions, says the brand. **P**

• Ingeborg van Lotringen is the author of *Great Skin: Secrets The Beauty Industry Doesn't Tell You* (Gibson Square, $29.99).

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Mind

SMART WAYS TO STAY SHARP, CALM AND POSITIVE

SIGN LANGUAGE

Did you know that non-verbal signals, such as body language, account for up to 80 per cent of all our daily communication? And it provides valuable information about how people are really feeling. One study found that the most trustworthy facial expression was a gentle raise of the eyebrows with a slight smile. According to the researchers, it conveys both friendliness and confidence. Two more interesting signs to watch out for: The look of surprise should be a short and quick transition into another emotion such as joy or anger. If someone holds a surprised glance for longer than a few seconds, there's a good chance they're faking it. Sweating is a known natural physiological reaction to being nervous or anxious. So, if you see someone lifting or moving their arms away from their body slightly to air their armpits, you know that they're feeling the pressure. Happy analysing!

WORDS: JUANA PARATHYRAS. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

SPARRING PARTNER

Is your partner getting on your nerves and have you had a few stressful couple of months to boot? They're most likely connected. In a new study, published in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, researchers looked at how romantic partners responded to each other when stressed. They found that the uptight partner would actively focus more on the negative behaviours of their other half, finding them more annoying, critical or impatient. Importantly, a single bad day won't cause this shift in focus, but rather an accumulation of taxing life circumstances over a period of time. So, next time your partner does something annoying, pause for a moment before you respond – it might not be all them.

71%

The percentage of people who said they get a better night's sleep when their sheets smell nice and fresh!

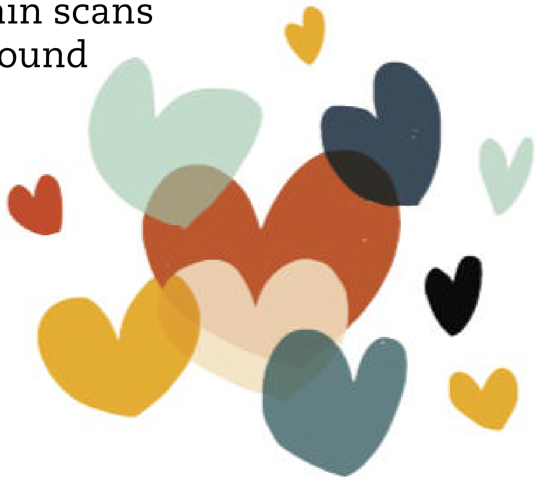
SOURCE: SLEEPFOUNDATION.ORG

Cha-grin

Hold up! Before you give up on that difficult task, persevering with it may just pave the way to self-growth. The new theory is that the secret to self-improvement is to embrace the uncomfortable. A study, published in the journal *Psychological Science*, affirmed that people often perceive discomfort as a sign to stop what they're doing or pursuing a challenging goal. Turns out the exact opposite is true and that the feeling of annoyance really means you're making progress. So, next time you feel like giving up, welcome that sense of unease and push through it – you just might taste success.

Power stroke

Swiss researchers studied the brain scans of people patting their dogs and found that touching, seeing and feeling a dog activated the part of the brain that regulates social and emotional interactions, meaning it's good for you. Oh, did we mention that dogs love it too?



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MOOD BOARD

Here's what you should know about the mood-boosting neurotransmitter serotonin and how you can increase it.

BY DR ANDREW WEIL

BOOST SEROTONIN *naturally*

If you want to increase your serotonin, you may be able to do so without medication. (Just be sure to consult your doctor before discontinuing any treatment.) That said, here are my top four recommendations.

1 **START MOVING** Exercise triggers the body's release of tryptophan and feel-good chemicals called endorphins. One study found that just 90 minutes of weekly exercise might improve mood as effectively as an antidepressant.

2 **GET SOME SUNLIGHT** Exposure to bright light can help balance serotonin levels. To benefit from this, take your exercise routine outside in the sun, or invest in a light box. This device mimics the sun's rays and is an effective treatment for seasonal affective disorder, or SAD, which is a low mood caused by lack of sunlight.

3 **SAY "OM"** Research is still in the early stages, but there's some evidence that meditating may help positively change the make-up of the brain, possibly by increasing serotonin, as well as other key chemicals.

4 **BOOST YOUR TRYPTOPHAN** Try raising your tryptophan levels by eating complex carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables, legumes and wholegrains, which may help your body process this amino acid better.

14 DAY MAKEOVER

Change your life in 2 WEEKS

Need a refresh? Overhaul your whole life by making just one small tweak each day with our easy-to-follow guide.

New year, new you, right? Not so fast. "Behaviour change is probably one of the most difficult tasks – especially sustained change," says exercise scientist Dr Michele Smallidge. And it's not just big things, like having a regular fitness regimen and good diet, that constitute your overall health. Critical to a healthy and balanced life is everything from how well you sleep to how much time you give the things that really lift you up, and making these part of your 'new normal' in 2023. Read on for the daily tweaks that'll make all the difference.

1

Day 1 ❯

SET A ‘SMART’ GOAL

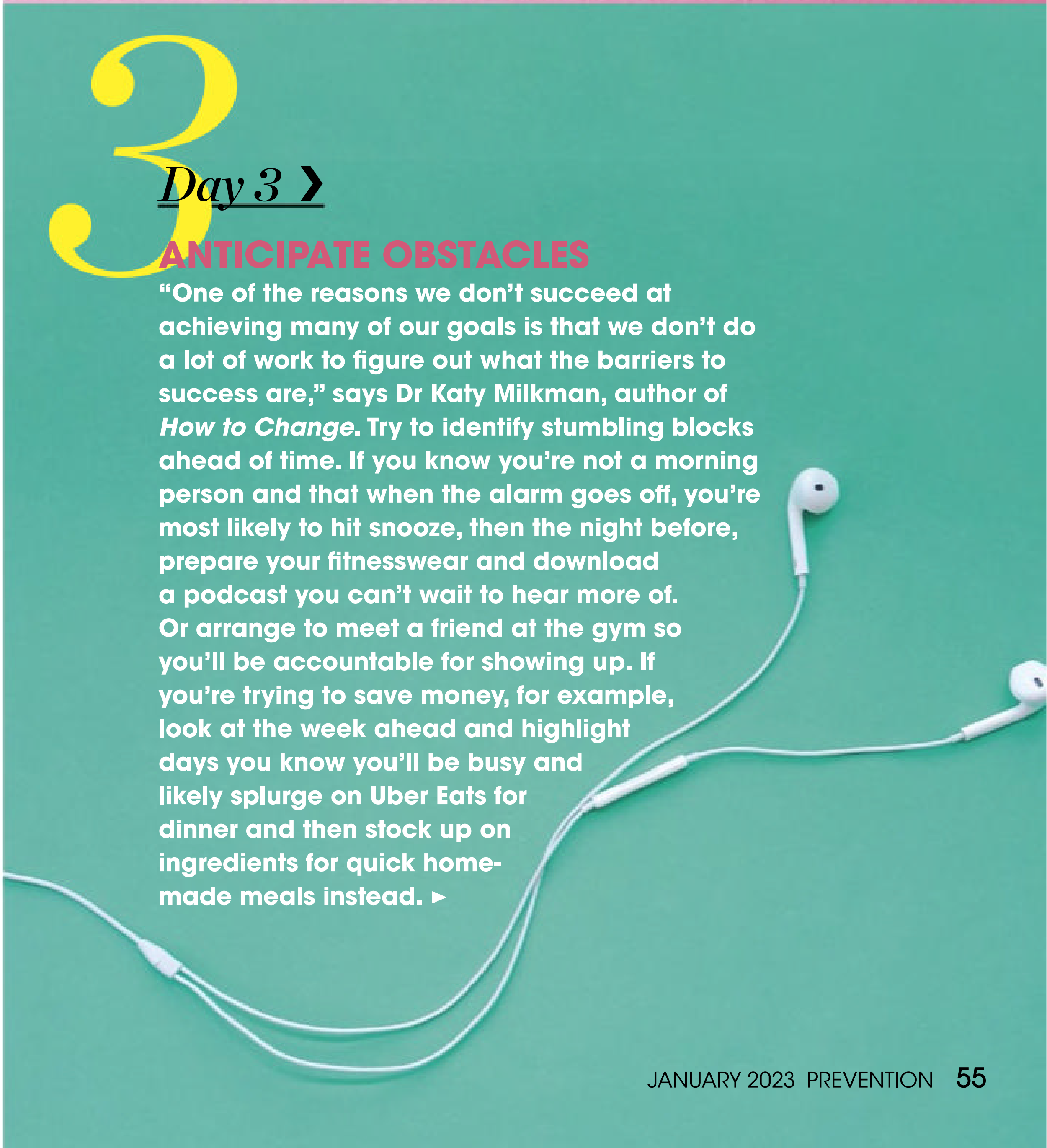
The first step towards change is figuring out exactly what you want to achieve. Use this cheat sheet:
BE SPECIFIC “Instead of having a big, larger-than-life ‘I’m going to eat healthy this year’ objective, try to come up with a goal that’s clear and precise,” says Dr Smallidge. For example, say “I’m only going to have a takeaway meal once a week.”
MAKE IT MEASURABLE Give yourself things to aim for that can be tracked, like walking for 20 minutes before work. “Because it’s measurable, you can check yourself,” she says.
KEEP IT ACHIEVABLE AND REALISTIC One way to make a change successful is to split it into mini goals. “Our brains work best when we break bigger lifestyle changes and goals into small, really actionable things,” says positive psychologist Dr Zelana Montminy. For example, someone who wants to write a book might be more successful if they commit to writing a paragraph every day. Each time you hit your mini goal, your brain will release a cocktail of feel-good chemicals that’ll increase your confidence and motivate you to keep going, Dr Montminy explains. You can always adjust your objective later as you make progress, but it’s a lot harder to start if your goal is overwhelming from the get-go.
SET A TIME FRAME In the same way that a school term serves as a framework for the progression of the classes, Dr Smallidge says that having a specified time in which to complete a task provides structure.

2

Day 2 ❯

TELL SOMEONE

“Don’t just keep these things inside you,” says Dr Montminy. “Tell your partner, tell a friend. Inform someone about the change you hope to make, and tell them exactly how they can help support you.” It’s nice to have a cheerleader and someone to hold you accountable.



3

Day 3 ❯

ANTICIPATE OBSTACLES

“One of the reasons we don’t succeed at achieving many of our goals is that we don’t do a lot of work to figure out what the barriers to success are,” says Dr Katy Milkman, author of *How to Change*. Try to identify stumbling blocks ahead of time. If you know you’re not a morning person and that when the alarm goes off, you’re most likely to hit snooze, then the night before, prepare your fitnesswear and download a podcast you can’t wait to hear more of. Or arrange to meet a friend at the gym so you’ll be accountable for showing up. If you’re trying to save money, for example, look at the week ahead and highlight days you know you’ll be busy and likely splurge on Uber Eats for dinner and then stock up on ingredients for quick home-made meals instead. ►

Day 4 ❯

CREATE A PLAN FOR SABOTEURS

In the real world, there are some people and situations that we know are likely to derail us. So, pause today to create strategies to combat them.

- Talk to them and explain that this behaviour change is important to you and that you really need them to be supportive, suggests Dr Smallidge. Sometimes people don't realise how serious you are or even that they're sabotaging your effort.
- If you go out with friends most Friday nights for drinks, but you're trying to abstain from alcohol, ask if they'd be up for a different activity.
- No luck with the first two tips? Then go your own way and join a walking group or local tennis club. "Sometimes rather than getting someone on board, it's easier to find some new people with aligned goals to add to your social circle," says Dr Milkman.

Day 5 ❯

MAKE HABITS HOLD HANDS

When you're trying to start a new behaviour, incorporating it into something you already do can help make it more automatic, says physician Dr Anita Skariah. If you make your lunch each day, consider it incomplete until you've plopped a serving of vegies on your plate. Or, add a few minutes of meditation to your wind-down period at the end of the evening. If you're doing cardio workouts, include 10 minutes of weight training. "Most of us are creatures of habit and enjoy structure," she says. "If your brain is already trained for a specific habit and you add something to it, you'll be more likely to adopt the change quickly."

Day 6 ❯

TRACK YOUR DOWNTIME

You may be counting your steps, but it turns out that the time you're inactive is just as important. Ensure you're getting enough sleep and that you're allowing regular time in your schedule for little pleasures that make you happy – a bubble bath, a good book, a chat with a friend, painting or playing music.

Day 7 ❯

EVALUATE YOUR SLEEP

When you short-change your sleep, it increases your body's release of stress hormones, potentially causing you to eat more. Good rest is as crucial to your overall health as your waistline, so it's important you're starting from a strong foundation. As part of getting a solid seven to eight hours' sleep a night, "you need to create a soothing sleep environment," says sleep medicine expert Dr Fariha Abbasi-Feinberg. She suggests evaluating the comfort of your bed. "The texture of the sheets and the weight and heat of any blankets matter, too." If you and your partner move around a lot, it might help to consider a bigger bed or separate coverings, she adds.

Day 8 ❯

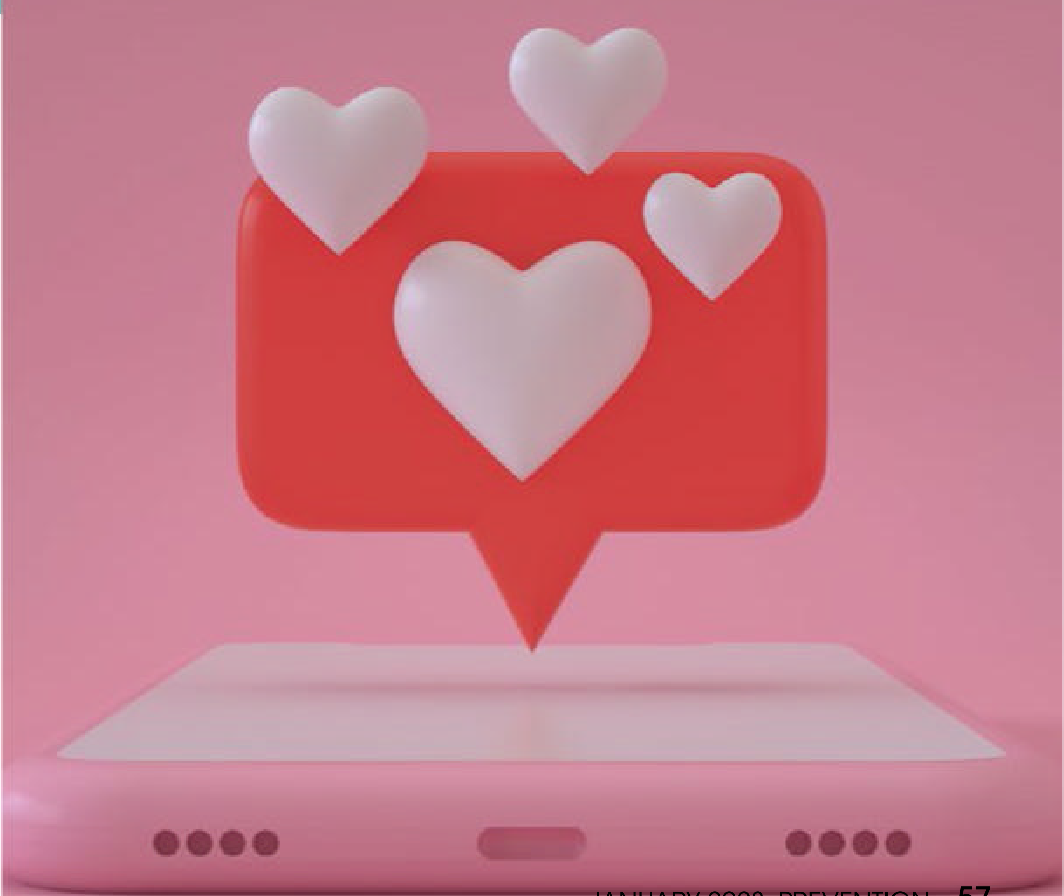
BREATHE HAPPINESS

Pay attention to your breath today, allowing it to slow down so you can better focus on conversations you're having, meals you're eating and the way you're moving throughout your day, rather than racing through the hours on autopilot. "When you're able to consider what's really important to you, you can see how much time you spend worrying about unimportant things," says Dr Maryanna Klatt, who studies ways to reduce stress-related chronic illness.

Day 9 ❯

TAP INTO YOUR MOOD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

"Everyone talks about limiting social media, but what I mean [by tapping into your mood] is noticing how you feel before and after engaging with it," says Kati Morton, author of *Are U OK?* "If you feel worse, consider who you're following or what you're doing online and make some changes." You can also delete/hide your account altogether if it's driving your anxiety through the roof. (Our minds can handle only so many political arguments and images of fake-perfect lives.) If social media leaves you feeling connected and amused, keep scrolling – as long as you're also staying present in your real life. ►



14
DAY
MAKEOVER

10

Day 10 ❯

PLAN JUST THREE DINNERS FOR THE WEEK

Three is the magic number – just enough to give you a sense of control, but not so many as to make you nuts when plans change throughout the week. “Keep it simple and flexible,” says dietitian Lauren O’Connor. She suggests buying ingredients for three or four meals and then, as the week progresses, you can make your daily dinner accordingly.

12

Day 12 ❯

BE PICKY

Between work commitments, family obligations and grocery shopping, it’s easy to overcommit. “When you say yes or no to an invitation or request, take a moment to reflect on whether it moves you closer to who and where you want to be in your life or away from what’s most important to you,” says psychologist Dr Trish Leonard-Curtin. Today, think about all the common examples of ‘yes’ that should really be ‘no’ in your life and start creating some strategies you can draw on next time.

11

Day 11 ❯

BOOK YOUR NEXT HOLIDAY

One US study shows that women who take time out at least twice a year have a lower heart attack risk than those who do so rarely. And researchers have found that even thinking about an upcoming trip can boost happiness for weeks (see our travel feature on p100 for inspiration!).

13

Day 13 ❯

WRITE AWAY YOUR INNER CRITIC

You may scoff at the idea of journalling, but when your inner detractor picks up her loudspeaker, jot down the kind words you'd say to a friend in the same situation. "We have such a hard time channelling compassion for ourselves," says psychologist Dr Emma Seppälä. "Writing it down makes it easier to shift perspective." And if you're berating yourself for failing to reach a goal, pausing to note it down will help you spot patterns you were unaware of that are sabotaging your success.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

14

Day 14 ❯

REWARD YOURSELF

When you hit milestones – no matter how tiny – celebrate them! "All those small wins eventually will add up to the big win," says Dr Smallidge. Recognising little achievements will keep you motivated to stick with your behavioural changes – and remind you how great it feels to make progress. Here are a few kilojoule-free ways to acknowledge your win.

- Soak in a pampering scented bath with a relaxing candle
- Have your nails done
- Book a beauty/spa treatment
- Rewatch an all-time favourite movie, performance or TV show
- Enjoy a long walk in a beautiful park or bush setting
- Buy concert or movie tickets
- Buy yourself a bunch of fragrant flowers for your home **P**

14 DAY FITNESS

SHAPE UP *in 2 weeks*

Think you're too busy to fit in a fortnight of fitness? Well, lucky for you, personal trainer Jenna Wolfe has found the most straightforward way to do it.

If you're anything like me, you spend most of your day doing everything for everybody else... kids, colleagues, family, friends, pets. You're so wrapped up in life that you fail to carve out time for yourself. It happens! When I can't find the motivation to get moving, I map out two weeks of super-short routines that – no matter what – I have to find time in my day to do.

Why two weeks? Because it's just long enough for your body to get used to exercising again and for you to see results. Remember, you have to start somewhere to get somewhere. These workouts incorporate kilojoule-burning moves to target your whole body. To see even greater changes, repeat both weeks for a full month of movement. It's the perfect slim-down plan, so let's get started!

Do each move for 1 minute, rest for 30 seconds, then repeat this pattern twice.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

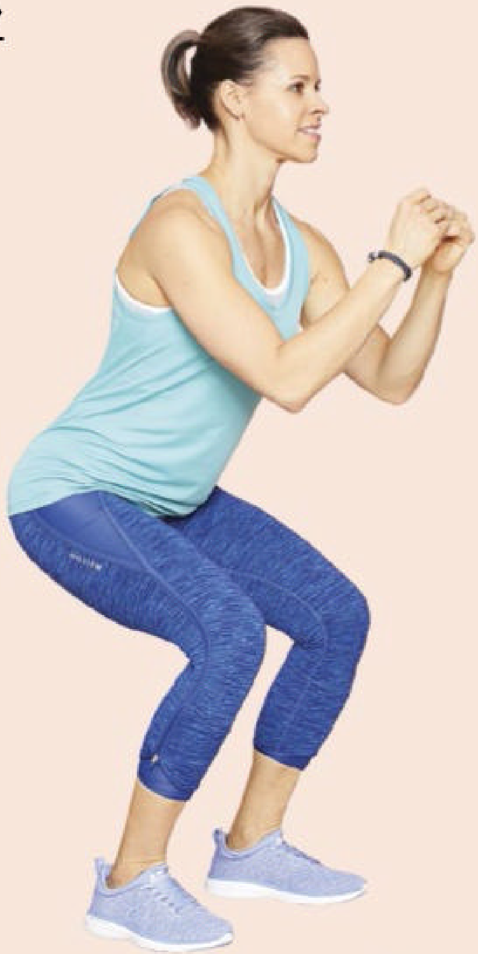
WEEK 1

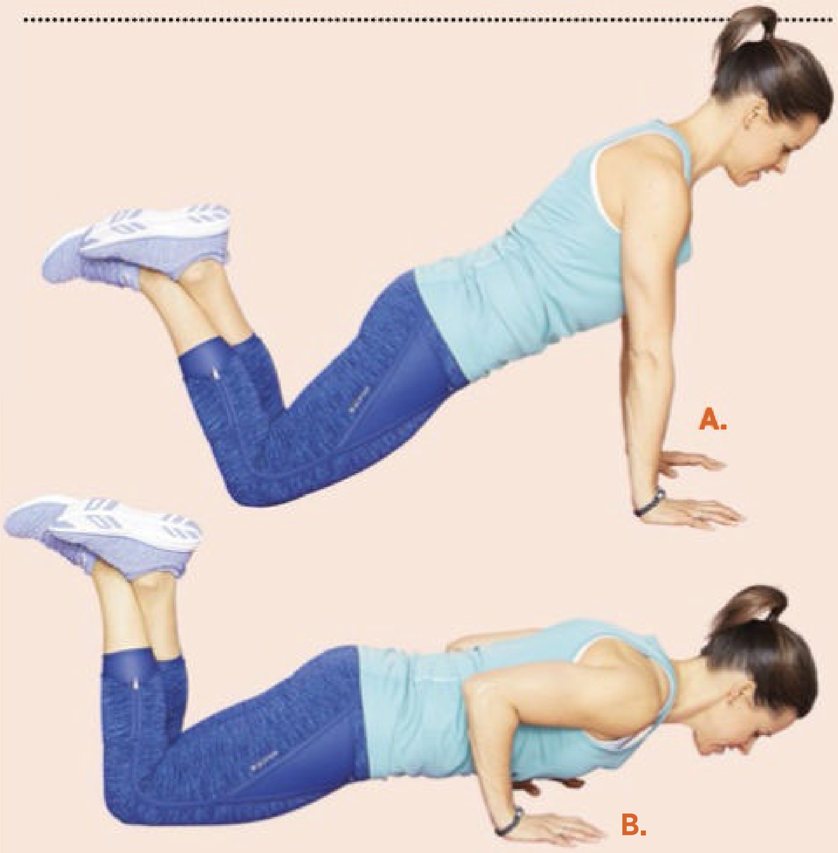
MONDAY ❯

SQUATS

Tones: legs, glutes

Stand with your legs a little wider than shoulder-width apart. Push through your heels as you bend your knees and bring your bottom down as if you're sitting in a chair. Thrust your hips forward to stand back up to start.



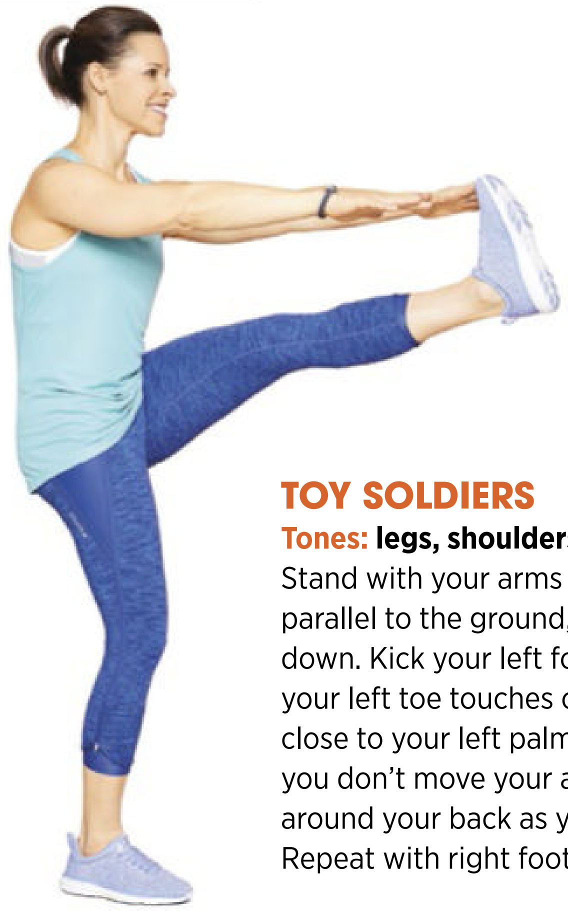


ASSISTED PUSH-UPS

Tones: arms, chest

A. Start in a push-up position, with knees on floor and shoulders in line with wrists (upper body in a straight line). **B.** Bend your elbows and lower your chest until it's just above the ground. Push up to starting position.

TUESDAY ❯



TOY SOLDIERS

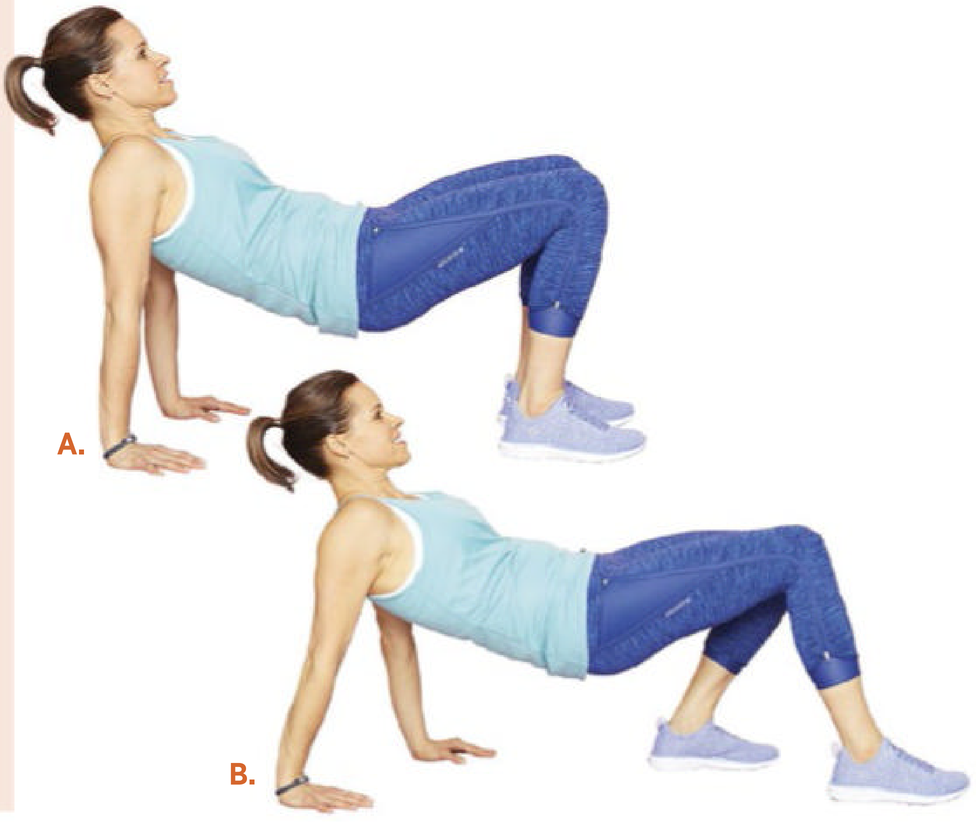
Tones: legs, shoulders

Stand with your arms straight out, parallel to the ground, palms facing down. Kick your left foot up so your left toe touches or comes close to your left palm. (Be sure you don't move your arms up or around your back as you kick.) Repeat with right foot to right palm.

CRAB WALK

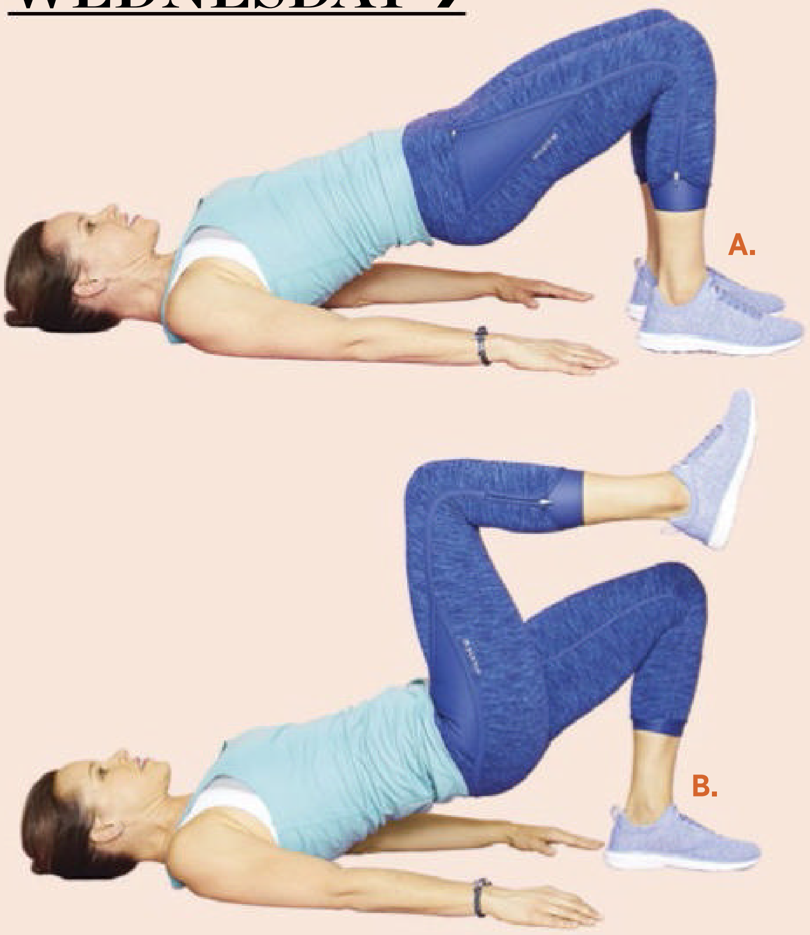
Tones: arms, back, glutes

A. Start in a tabletop position (hands and feet flat on the ground; shoulders in line with knees). **B.** Walk three steps back using your arms and legs and then go three steps forward. Remember to squeeze your glutes as you step. ►



PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS ECKERT/STUDIO D

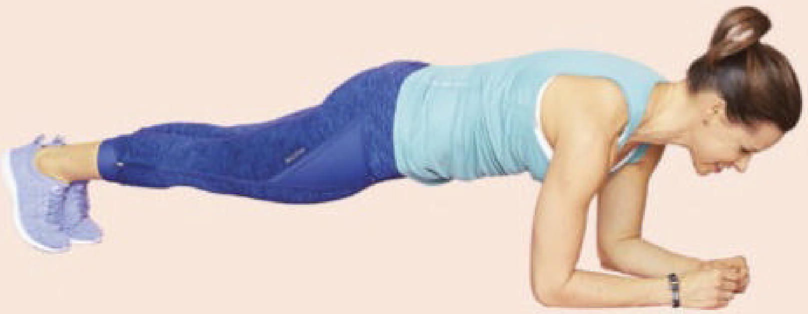
WEDNESDAY ❯



HIP-RAISE MARCHES

Tones: **glutes**

A. Lie on your back, arms by your sides, knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Squeeze your glutes and lift your bottom into a bridge. **B.** Bring your right knee toward you slightly, then return your leg to the floor and repeat with the left leg.



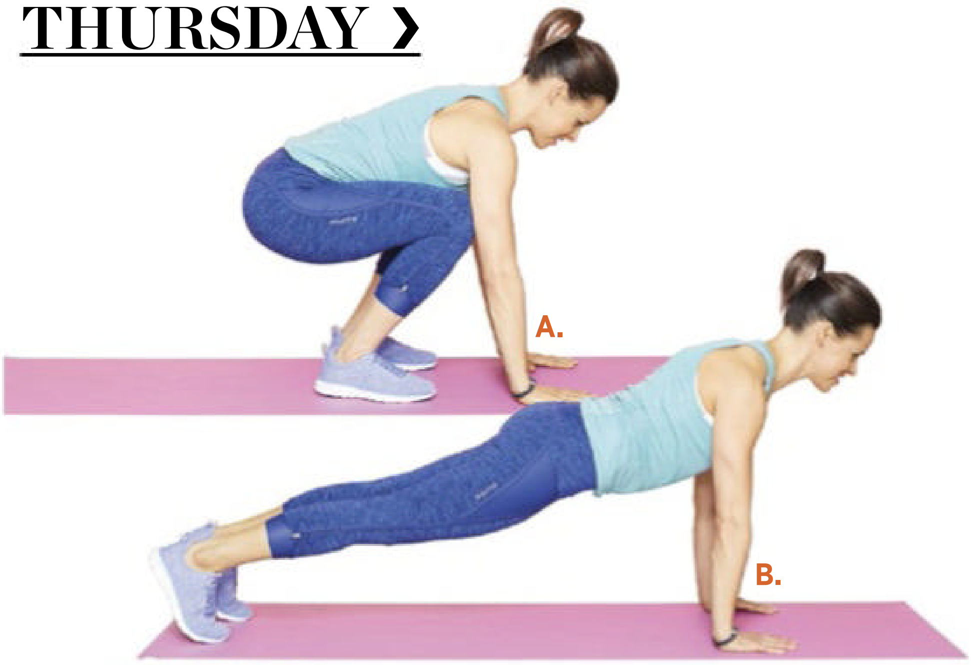
CLASSIC PLANK

Tones: **core, shoulders**

Place your forearms on the ground, with legs straight out behind you and toes on the ground. There should be an invisible line from your shoulders to your ankles. Remember to keep your hands loose (no tight fists).

Tip: **Do this for 30 seconds (with practice, you can work your way up to 1 minute)**

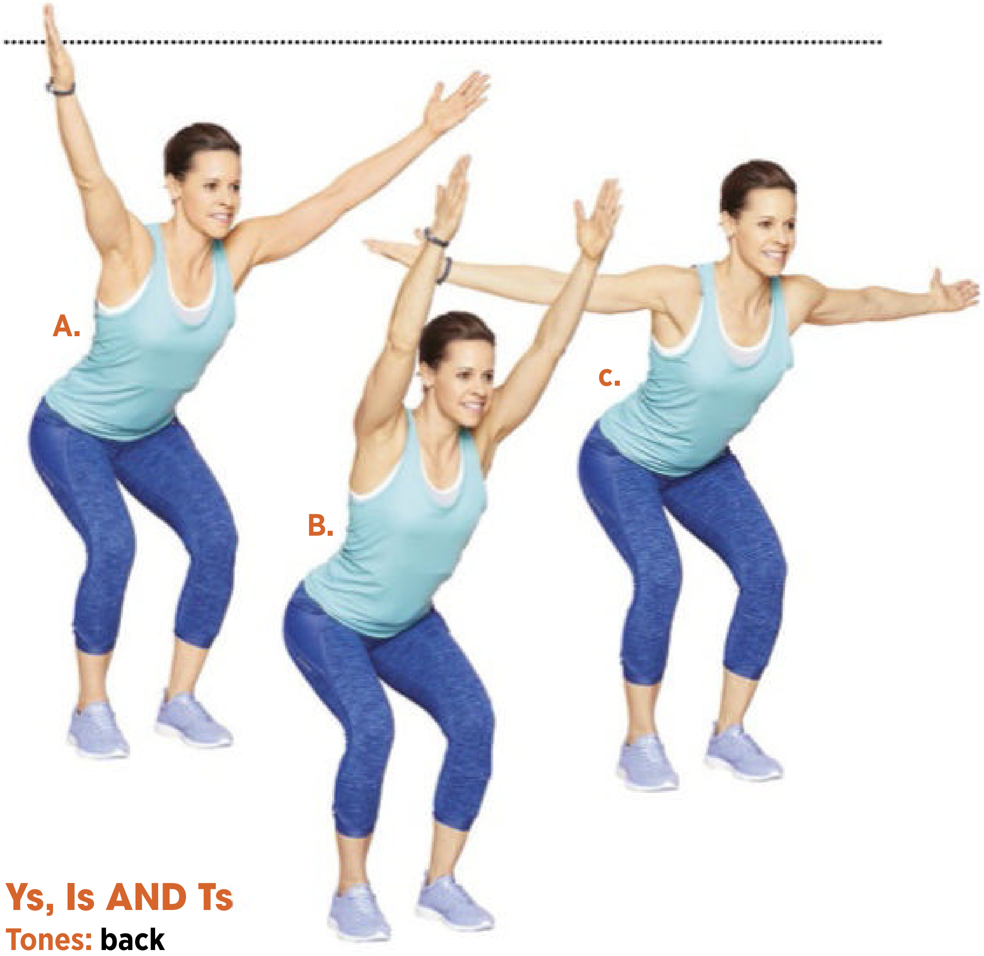
THURSDAY ❯



SQUAT THRUSTS

Tones: **shoulders, core, legs**

A. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Bend down and put hands on the floor. **B.** Hop or walk your feet back so you're in a push-up position, then immediately hop or walk your feet in and stand up.

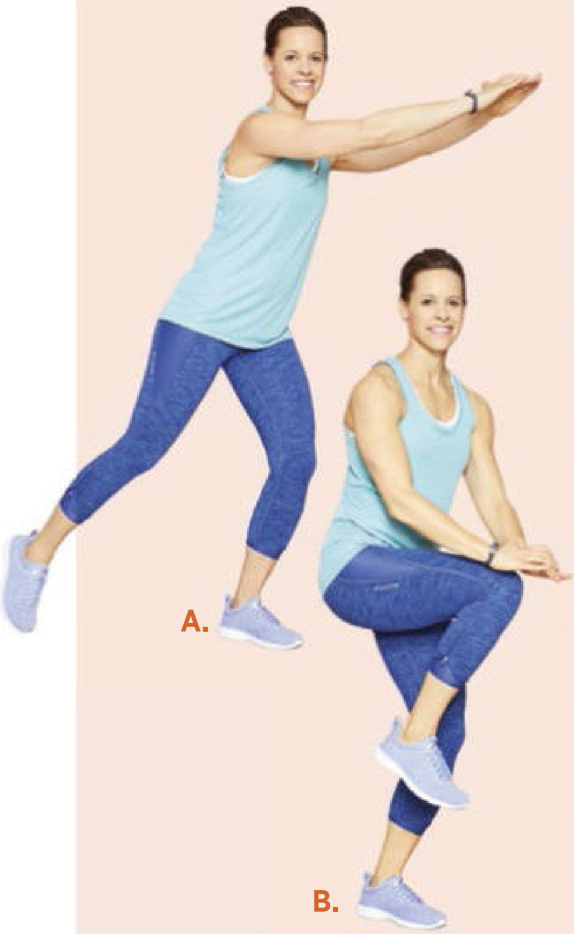


Ys, Is AND Ts

Tones: **back**

Start standing, then bend forward slightly (don't round your back). Bring your arms out in front of you into a Y shape, leading with your thumbs, then quickly bring your arms down; repeat for 20 reps. Next, make an I shape by bringing your arms straight up, parallel to your ears, then down; repeat for 20 reps. Lastly, make a T shape by bringing your arms up by your sides, then lower them; repeat for 20 reps. This should take about 1 minute.

FRIDAY ›



DIAGONALS

Tones: **glutes, shoulders, core**

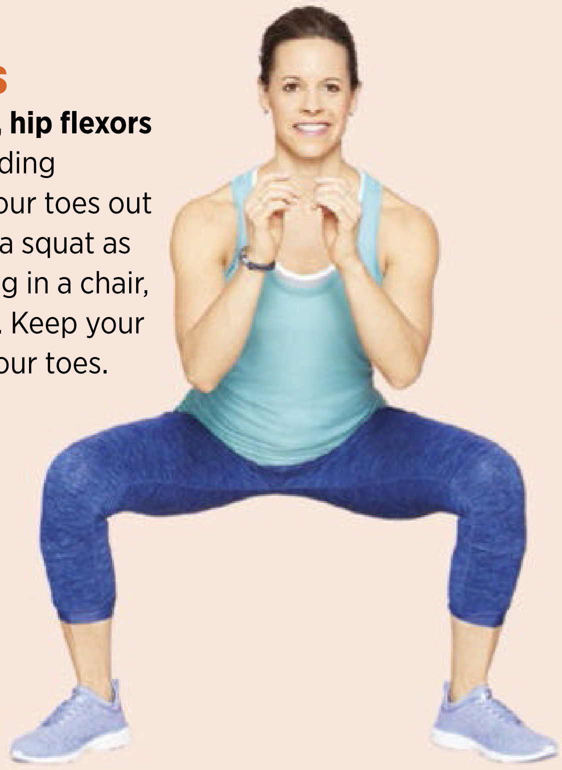
A. Stand with feet wider than shoulder-width apart, arms out to the left with your left leg slightly bent.

B. Lift your right knee up as you lower your arms so your hands meet your knee. Repeat motion for 30 seconds, then continue on the opposite side for 20 seconds by bringing your arms up on the right side, then down, while lifting left knee.

SUMO SQUATS

Tones: **glutes, legs, hip flexors**

Start in a wide standing position and turn your toes out slightly. Lower into a squat as though you're sitting in a chair, then stand back up. Keep your knees in line with your toes.



SATURDAY ›

DO YOUR FAVOURITE WORKOUT OF THE WEEK

SUNDAY ›

REST

WEEK 2

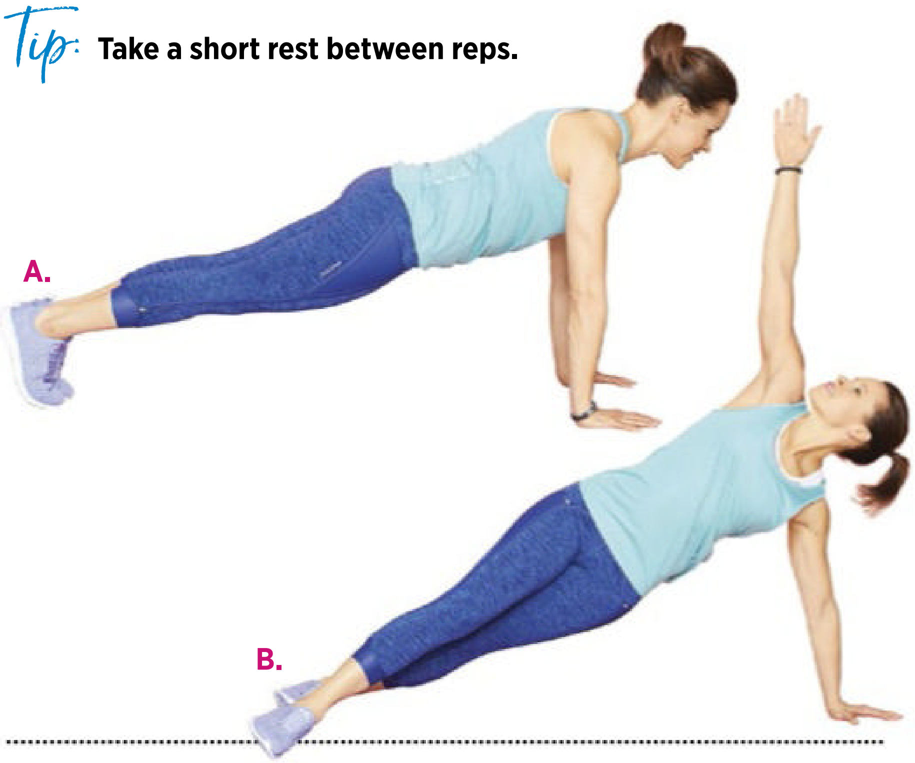
MONDAY ›

PLANK Ts

Tones: **arms, back, shoulders**

A. Start in a push-up position with your feet shoulder-width apart. **B.** Lift your right arm and rotate your body to open to a T, look up at your hand, then come back to start with both hands on the mat. Rotate up on the other side to make a T by raising your left arm.

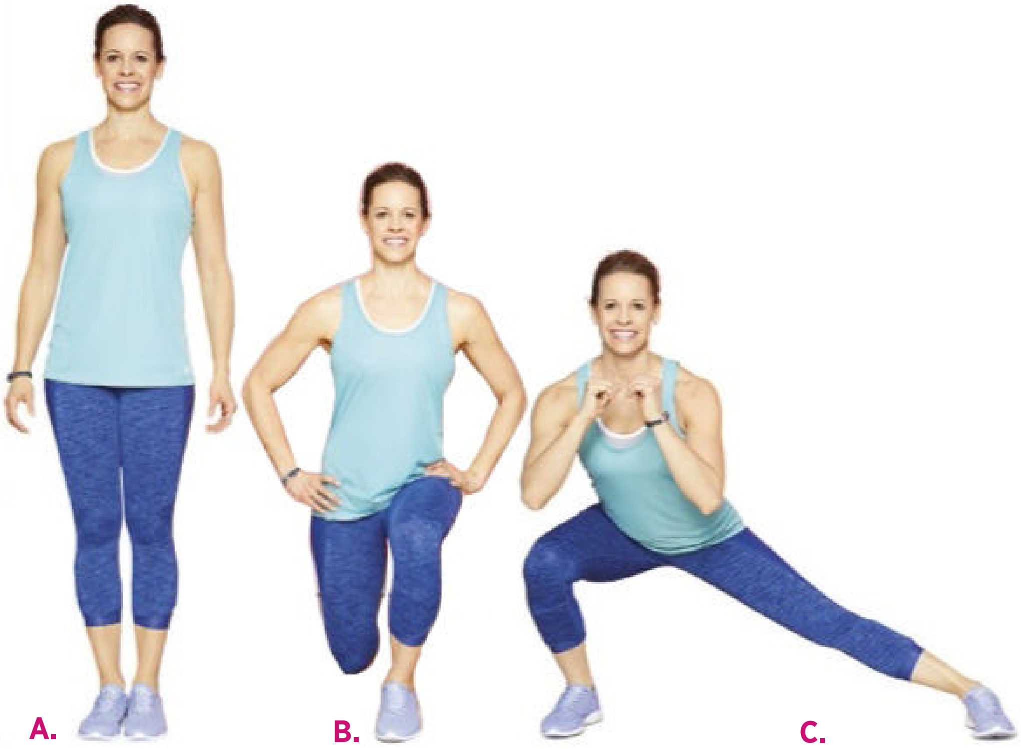
Tip: **Take a short rest between reps.**



AROUND-THE-CLOCK LUNGES

Tones: **glutes**

A. Start in a standing position. **B.** Lunge forward with your left leg, then bring that leg back to start. **C.** Take a step out to the side with your left leg so you're in a side lunge; come back to start. Finally, step back into a lunge with your left leg, then return to start. Do the same half circle with your right leg. ►



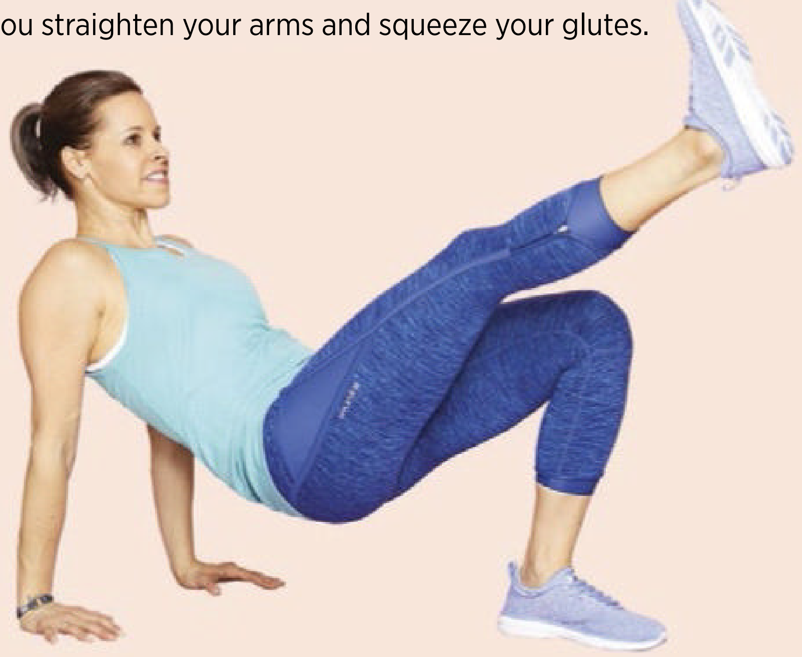
PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS ECKERT/STUDIO D

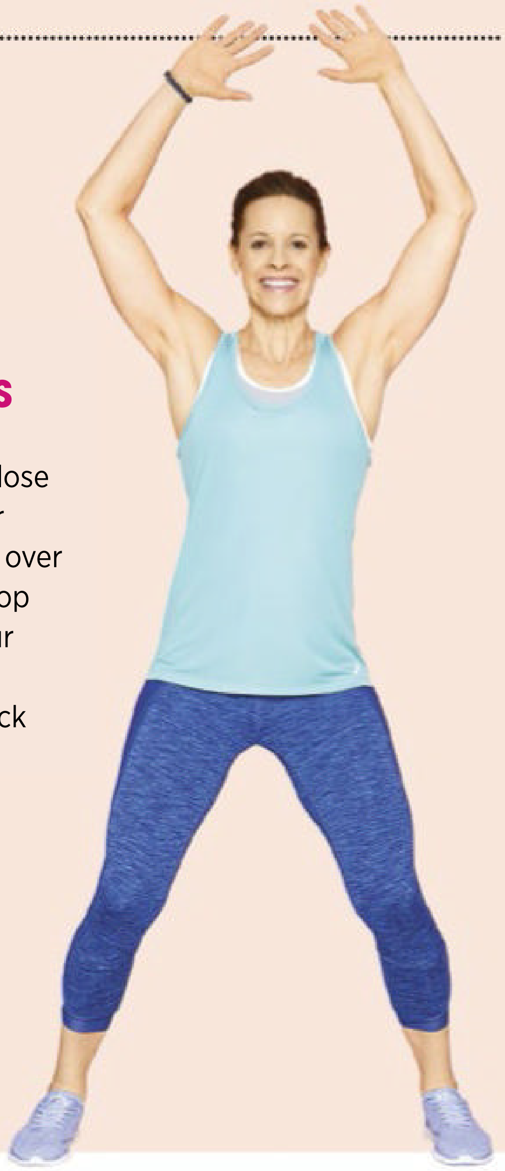
TUESDAY ❯

CRAB KICKS

Tones: arms, back, legs, glutes

Come into a tabletop position with your hands and feet on the floor and your torso lifted. Kick your right leg up, lower, then repeat on the left. Make sure you straighten your arms and squeeze your glutes.





JUMPING JACKS

Tones: legs, arms

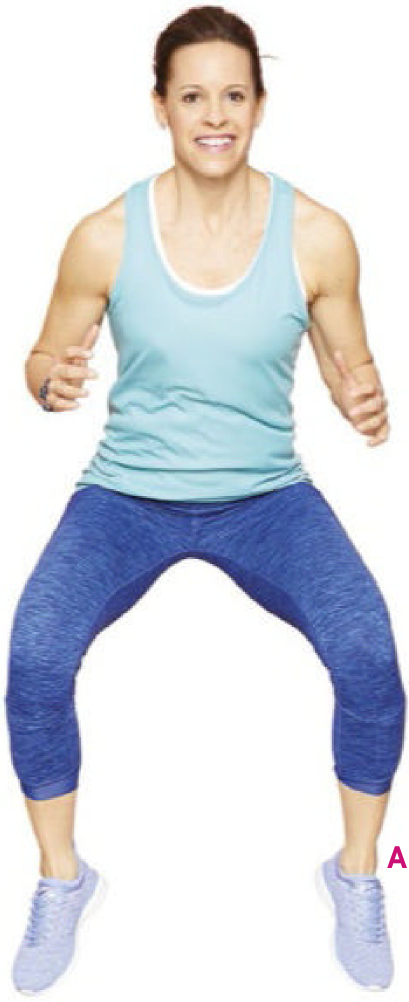
Stand with your feet close together, arms by your sides. Bring your arms over your head while you hop your legs out. Hop your legs together while bringing your arms back down by your sides.

WEDNESDAY ❯

HOP-HOP-TOUCH

Tones: glutes, legs

A. Stand with your legs slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Do two hops in a row (with legs wide). **B.** Immediately squat and touch the floor. Return to start.



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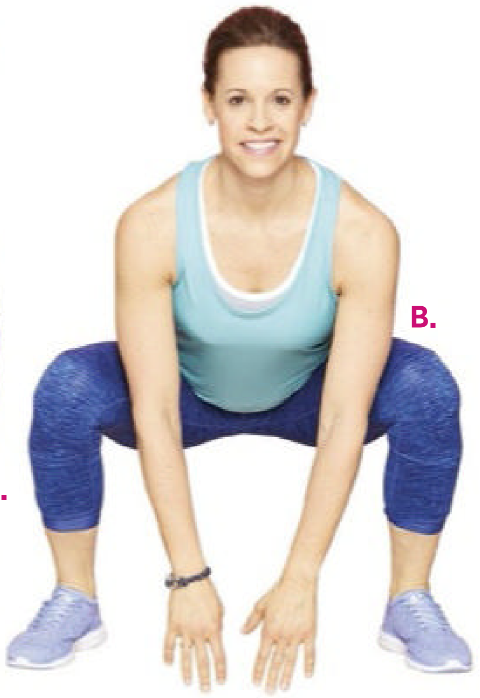

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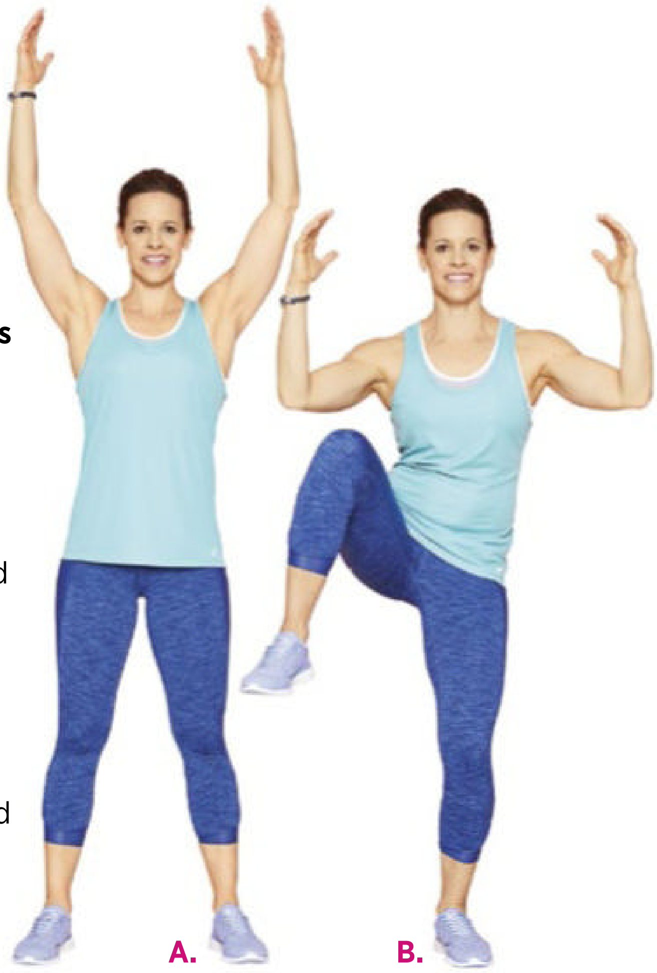
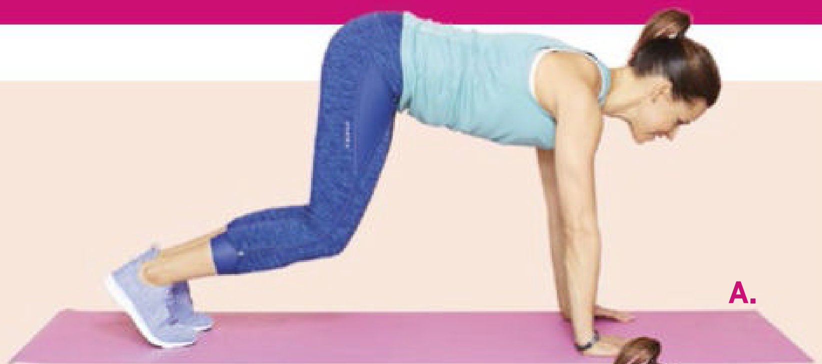
APPLE PICKERS

Tones: core, shoulders

A. Stand with your legs slightly wider than shoulder-width apart and raise your arms. **B.** Pull both your elbows down and bring your right knee to your right elbow, then come back to start with arms over your head. Next, pull both elbows down and bring your left knee to your left elbow.

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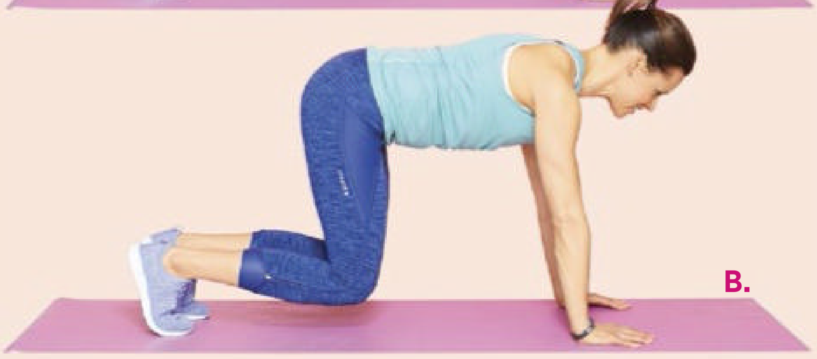
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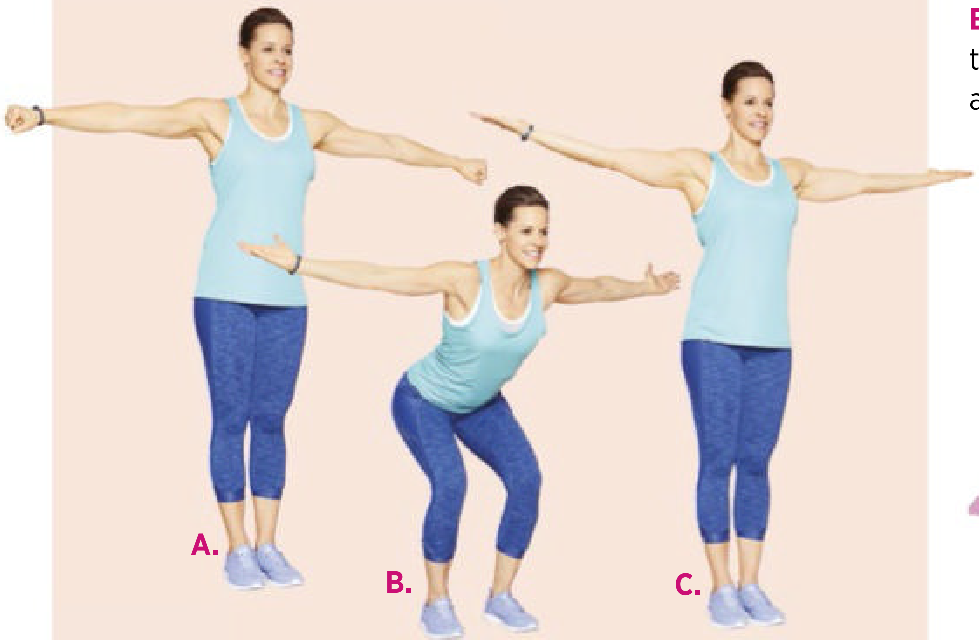
THURSDAY ❯

QUAD DROPS

Tones: **legs, shoulders**

A. Start on your hands and knees with wrists underneath your shoulders, knees underneath your hips and toes curled. Lift your knees and bottom slightly. **B.** Drop your knees and bottom until you almost hit the mat. Continue to raise and lower in a gentle pulsing motion.

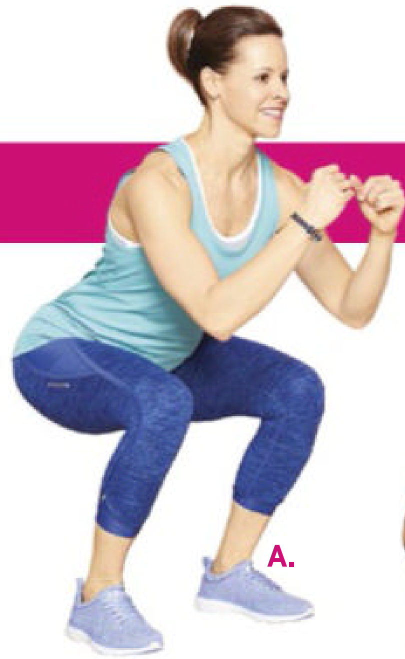


ARM CIRCUIT

Tones: **arms**

A. Stand with your arms out in a T shape. With your hands in fists, do 20 forward circles and 20 backward circles.
B. Bend forwards, keep your arms out and turn your palms up to the ceiling. Lift your palms up and down slightly and repeat for 20 reps. **C.** Stand up straight with arms out and palms up to the ceiling and move them forward and backward slightly; repeat for 20 reps. Return to the arm circles (in position A) until you reach 1 minute total.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS ECKERT/STUDIO D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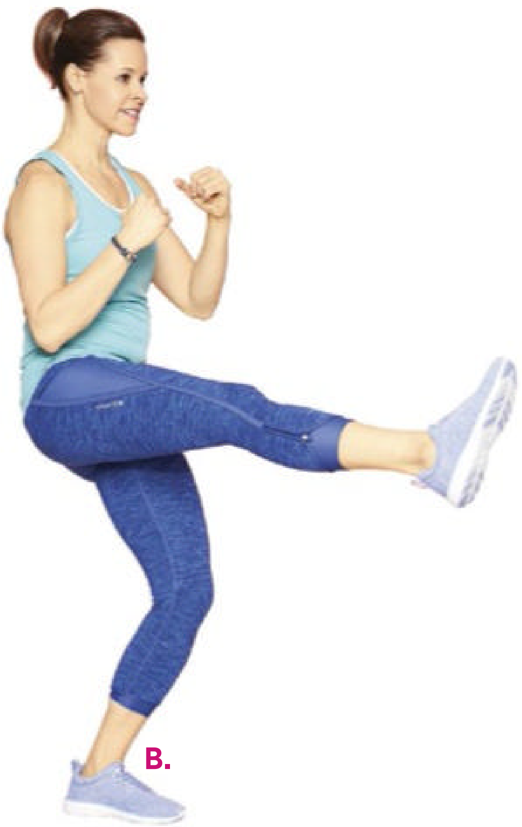
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FRIDAY ❯

SQUAT FRONT KICKS

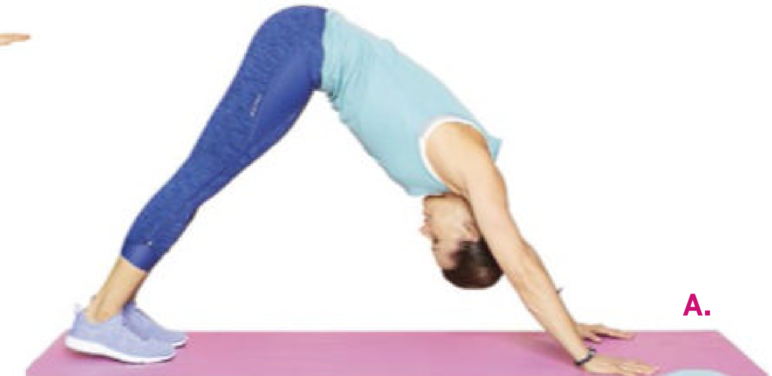
Tones: **glutes, legs**

A. Stand with legs shoulder-width apart and squat.
B. Kick forward with your right leg as you come up. Bring that leg back so you're standing on both feet, then squat and kick with your left leg.

KNEE TUCKS

Tones: **shoulders, core**

A. Start in a downward dog position (hands and feet flat on the ground, bottom in the air, so your body makes a V shape).
B. Come forward into a push-up position and bring your right knee toward your chest. Hold for 10 seconds, then bring your knee back and return to downward dog. Do the same on the left side.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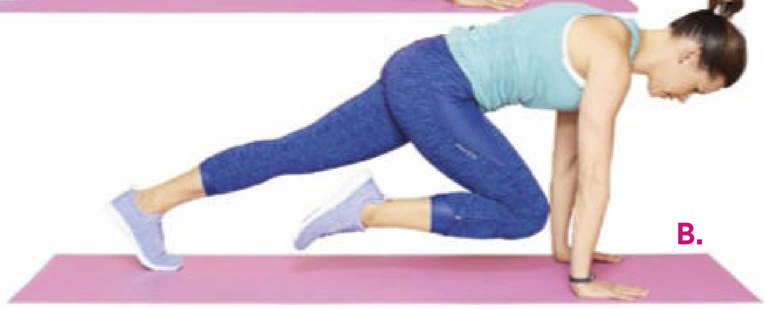
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SATURDAY ❯

DO YOUR FAVOURITE WORKOUT OF THE WEEK

SUNDAY ❯

REST

Melissa Doyle

The TV presenter talks resilience and why having a good cry is essential to finding acceptance and peace.

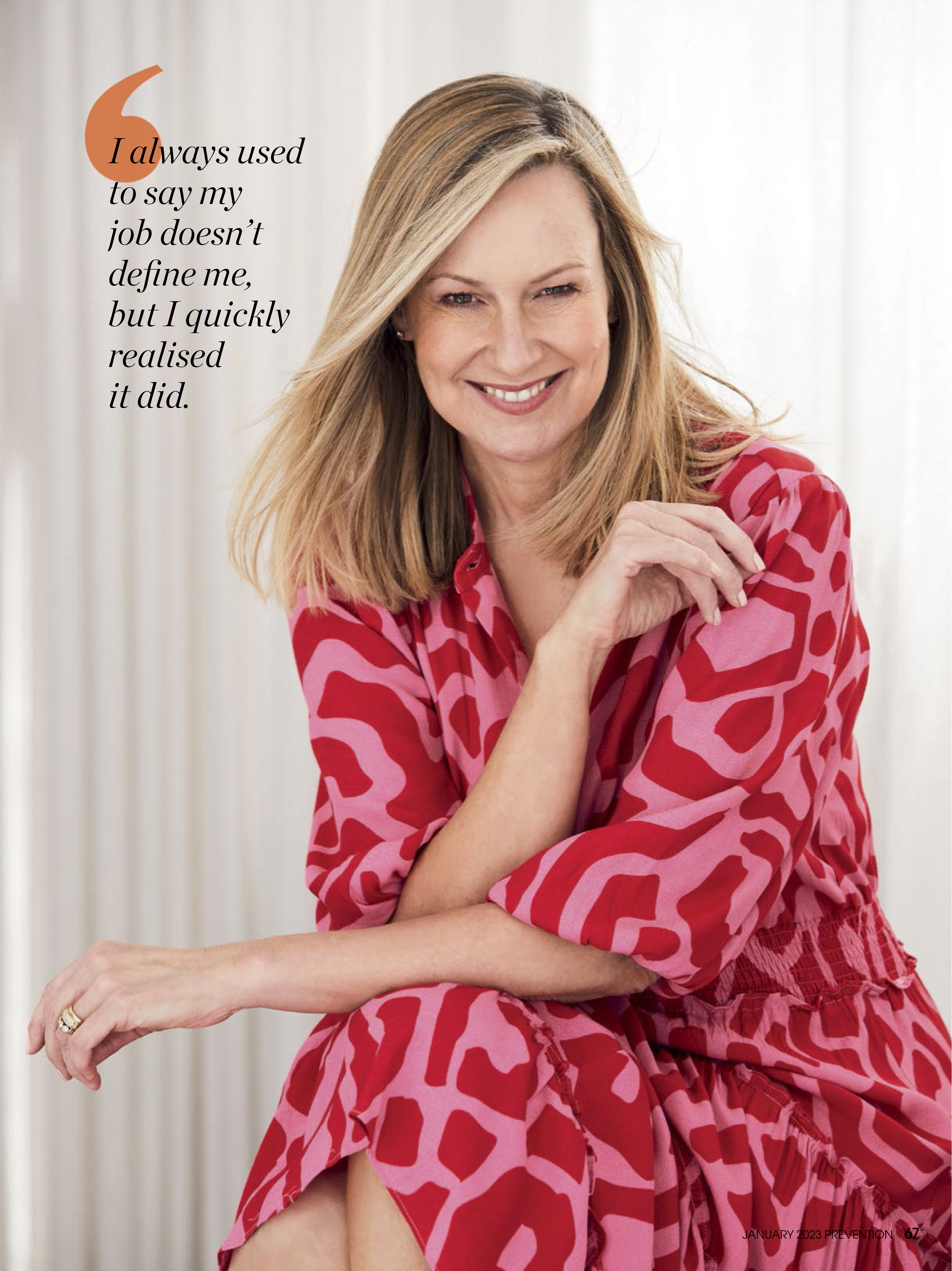
BY JUANA PARATHYRAS PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL SUESSE

Melissa Doyle is effortlessly smiling and laughing in front of our photographer's camera. There's a gentle ease and elegance about her. She lights up while sharing stories about her family, laughing at her eldest's decision to cut his hair into a questionable style. It's almost like spending the morning with a girlfriend you've known for ages. But Melissa, 52, is not your average girlfriend, having enjoyed a prolific career spanning three decades covering television, radio and print.

Her new book, *15 Seconds of Brave: The Wisdom of Survivors*, has been making waves and there's another one in the works, she's currently filming *This is Your Life* for the Seven Network, has launched a podcast, *Age Against the Machine*, and is the weekend breakfast host for Sydney's smoothfm. But, as busy as she's been, she's still most recognised and loved for her 11-year stint as the 'queen of Aussie brekkie TV', a label that she carries proudly. "I still get introduced as 'former Sunrise presenter' and that was nearly 10 years ago," she says, laughing. "People see you in a certain way and that's lovely and humbling and I'm so grateful. I wouldn't change it."

LEAVING STABILITY BEHIND

In late 2020, Melissa found herself facing something she hadn't quite anticipated. Leaving her role at the Seven Network after 25 years was a big mind shift. "You know the place inside out; you know everybody and the people feel like a second family," she says. "It's a remarkable opportunity to have worked for that long and loved it." Moving on from that level of stability "took a little bit ►



> *I always used to say my job doesn’t define me, but I quickly realised it did.*

‘I’m a glass-half-full person who goes, ‘Okay, that’s done. Shut that door. What am I going to do next?’

of adjustment", she says, smiling. Even when knowing that one's identity is largely wrapped up in what you do, no matter what that is, she says that "I always used to say my job doesn't define me, but I quickly realised that, to an extent, it did – and more than I thought." She also learnt that, as much as you try to wrap your head around change and embrace a new direction, "sometimes it takes people a little longer to adjust to the change, like in my case". But, as Melissa discovered, the challenge of change was also welcome. "I'm a glass-half-full kind of person who goes, 'Okay, that's done. Shut that door. What am I going to do next?' It took a while, but I got there, and I feel like it's been such an exciting ride ever since."

FINDING FREEDOM

This new-found liberty has led Melissa to always embrace the new. "I'm excited by the opportunity to do different things, which I'm loving after being locked in a role for so many years," she says. "When I left Channel Seven, it just felt like all these opportunities were opening up and I could do whatever I wanted. I feel very grateful that I'm in a position where I can pick and choose what I want to do and what matters to me. I think you reach an age where you feel you've accumulated enough experience, skills and wisdom to be able to do that. Now I don't have to do things I don't care about or stories I'm not interested in."

The inspiration for her latest book, *15 Seconds of Brave: The Wisdom of Survivors*, came out of the turmoil of 2020. It's an insightful collection of stories about resilience and how people have overcome extraordinary circumstances. "I was, and we all were, completely thrown off course [by the pandemic]," recalls Melissa. "Everybody was going through a degree of something, whether it was job loss, illness, isolation from family and friends and we didn't know what was going to happen. Everything just felt weird and off kilter."

It was also during this time that Melissa turned 50 and her son, Nick, 21, moved overseas (Melissa also has an 18-year-old daughter, Talia). "Smack bang in the middle of the pandemic!" she says. "I couldn't even walk him to the airport gate. It was really hard." In that moment, Melissa went back to something she felt most comfortable with: storytelling. "I'm a journalist and I tell stories, so I decided that's what I was going to do. It was my way of taking control of things. And I just love storytelling; I love it in any form."

Possibly the most rewarding aspect of her job is having people trust her with their stories. "That feels really precious," she says. "When a person sits down and talks to you about what's happened to them, and they trust you to treat that carefully and be true to their story, I feel like that's the biggest responsibility ever. I also feel incredibly humbled that people have trusted me." ►

This is my life

LIFE OF THE SHOW
Melissa presents the famous big red book to acclaimed Australian actress Rebecca Gibney on the new series of *This is Your Life*.

CRA
COMMERCIAL RADIO AWARDS

LOOKING SMOOTH
On the red carpet at the 2022 Australian Commercial Radio Awards, where she represented Sydney's smoothfm.

UNITED STATE
With husband of 27 years John Dunlop (far left) as they bid farewell to their son, Nick, who's returning to the US to study.

LOVE AT FUR SIGHT
Melissa says she loves walking her beautiful border collie, Maggie, as it allows her to enjoy some time out in the park.

MELISSA WEARS (OPENING SPREAD) BRAVE+TRUE DRESS.
THIS PAGE: LORNA JANE JACKET AND TIGHTS.

> *I'm such a crier... I was standing in the hotel shower just sobbing. I just let it out.*

She also credits the people and their stories for having a defining impact on her. "I feel all of them, in their own little way, have shaped me. Every story, every person I've encountered has bumped, chipped, added or rubbed off on me and I hope I'm a better journalist for it."

AT AN IDEAL CROSSROADS

While Melissa looks the picture of cool, calm and collected, inside it's a different story. "I always feel like it's a bit of a pinball machine in there," she says, referring to her ever-curious mind. "There are days when I know I've totally bitten off more than I can chew, and I have too many things going on. But, still, I feel I like being busy. I quite like doing things I'm not very good at, just not [*doing* things]," she says, laughing. "But, I also look at it like I have this opportunity and I'm a believer in making hay while the sun shines. Who knows what might happen in the future?"

To that end, Melissa recently completed a company director's course, "which was one of the hardest things I've ever done". "I like learning, I love doing things that I've never done before and throwing myself in, boots and all, and just giving it a go. I guess it's also a bit of an age thing. I find myself at this lovely crossroads in life where my kids are older and they don't need me as they did 15 years ago. I can try things and give it a go. What's the worst that can happen?"

But when things do get hard, "I'll have a really good cry," she says. "I'm such a crier. I remember coming back from the Beaconsfield mine disaster in 2006. We flew from Tasmania to Melbourne and I was standing in the hotel shower just sobbing. I just let it out. I'm glad I can still cry. I think the day that I can't, that I don't get affected, means I've become so hardened that maybe I should go do something else. I'm grateful I still have that in me."

DISCOVERING HERSELF

Melissa says she's loving getting older and she delves into the perceptions and pressure that society puts on us around ageing in her podcast, *Age Against the Machine*. "I remember interviewing one woman [on the podcast] – we were the same age and in the same line of work – who said to me: 'I never tell anyone my age, not because I'm ashamed of it. I just don't want to admit it.' She said she didn't want those younger around her to look at her and think of her in that way. I thought that was an interesting point."

By comparison, Melissa feels grateful for reaching each new birthday. "Thank goodness that we get older because, if we didn't, I don't really want the alternative just yet. I'm active, I can still do things. I go to the gym, so I'm strong enough to move the lounge room, if I want to move the furniture," she says, laughing. "I don't go to the gym for vanity reasons. I go because I want to be capable of doing things. I love walking the dog because I can go to the park and stand there and watch the birds and the blue sky.

"As I'm getting older, I know who I am, I know what I've done and I'm proud of what I can do and what I've achieved and what I can do in the future. When I was younger, I lacked a lot of confidence and was really lucky that I got the chance to do what I do. Now I think, 'I can do that,' or 'I don't have to do that.' There's a lot of things I can't do, don't get me wrong, but I know what I can do – and that's a good place to be."

EXPLORING NEW THINGS

How does she stay healthy? She laughs. "Oh, I don't know," says Melissa. "It ebbed and flowed over the years, depending on life circumstances, kids and what's happening [in life]. I do my best. We eat well, I try to walk the dog every day. I wish I could tell you that I'm a yogi or that, you know, I drank kombucha, but, no, I don't. I just do my best, have a glass of wine and love it. I guess moderation and I just keep trying.

Right now, Melissa is thinking about her next adventure. "I just want to keep learning things, keep exploring and discovering things, asking questions or finding answers," she says. "I'm just a naturally curious person and that keeps me going. Just knowing that there are so many extraordinary people that have stories to tell and I can still tell them. I still love it."

OROTON SHIRT. SEED HERITAGE JEANS. BANGLES, STYLIST'S OWN. STYLING: JACKIE SHAW. HAIR AND MAKE-UP: AIMIE FIEBIG

Quick six for Melissa

When do you feel most inspired?
First thing in the morning!

Which season is your favourite?
Spring. I love the flowers, the smell. I like that summer is right around the corner, too.

What book have you just finished reading?
Before You Knew My Name by Aussie author Jacqueline Bublitz. I love it.

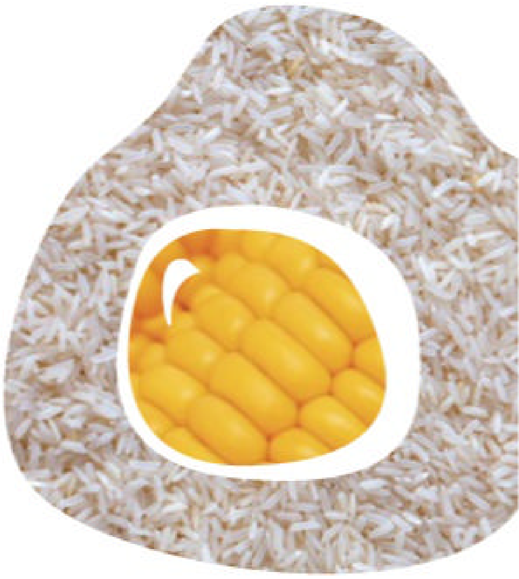
A skill you're working to master?
Not cutting or burning myself when I cook a meal!

Your least favourite food?
I'm not very good with very spicy food.

What does your ideal day off look like?
Absolutely nothing. When I open my diary and it's completely empty and clear, I'm happy.

Meat of the MATTER

Want to live longer, lose weight and think better? It all starts with piling less meat on your plate. Here's how to get started.



Did you know?

2.5 million Australians (or 12.1 per cent of the population) are now mostly eating vegetarian.

SOURCE: ROY MORGAN

Food trends quickly come and go, but a diet that's primarily based on plants is an easy, healthy and delicious way of eating and one that's also sustainable for the earth. It means prioritising plant foods, such as wholegrains, vegies, fruit, beans, chickpeas and lentils, nuts and seeds.

But what that looks like can vary from person to person. And it doesn't always mean giving up meat or fish entirely. For instance, with a Mediterranean diet, you eat mostly plant-based items, such as legumes, nuts, fruit and veg, but also some fish. If you're keto, it may be harder to follow a plant-based diet because a ketogenic plan nixes carb-rich foods like wholegrains, starchy vegies and fruit – but it can be done. And, although veganism is a plant-based diet, if that's not your thing, you don't have to ditch all animal products forever to consider yourself a plant-based eater.

"I consider myself plant-based because most of the foods I eat are plants," says dietitian Alexis Joseph. Plant-based eating is more of a template that encourages focusing on plant foods, not a restrictive approach that makes things off limits, adds nutrition psychologist Dr David Levitsky.

Over the following pages, we show you everything you need to know about going plant-based. ►

Q

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A PLANT-BASED DIET?

A proper plant-based diet is centred around whole foods, so it's rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fibre, says dietitian Amy Gorin. "Plant foods are packed with phytonutrients and fibre that support immunity, fight inflammation and feed the healthy bacteria in your gut," echoes Alexis. Swapping animal protein for plant protein has other benefits, too. "Regularly consuming foods high in plant protein versus animal protein can help prevent a slew of chronic conditions, including diabetes and heart disease," says Alexis. The nutrients found in plants help support healthy cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar levels. So, it's no surprise that plant-based diets have been linked to a lower risk of heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.

Plant-based diets can also support weight loss. Indeed, a 16-week study that compared overweight participants following a vegan, plant-based diet with a control group found that the plant-based vegan diet proved to be superior to the control diet in improving bodyweight, fat mass and insulin resistance markers, suggesting its benefits for both diabetes and weight loss.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET ENOUGH NUTRIENTS FROM PLANTS?

One common criticism of plant-based eating is it's tough to get adequate amounts of protein, iron and, if you're vegan, omega-3s. But it's totally doable. When it comes to protein, "it's important to note that protein isn't just found in meat," says Alexis. Although plants contain incomplete proteins (while animal products contain complete proteins), eating different sources of plant proteins daily helps you get in all the amino acids you need to support healthy body functions. (See more information on this in the 'Put these on your plate' section over the page.)

Another nutrient of concern for plant-based eaters? Iron. "Your body absorbs heme iron, the type found in animal products, more easily than it does plant-based iron, like that found in spinach," explains Amy. You can make plants' iron more bioavailable, though, by pairing it with foods containing vitamin C, Amy notes. For example, if you're eating a spinach salad, simply squeeze a little lemon juice on top.

Getting enough omega-3 fatty acids can be an issue, especially if you're vegan, since most people obtain their omega-3s from fatty fish, such as salmon, tuna and sardines. Two serves of seafood per week (a total of 200 grams) will give you the omega-3s your body needs. Other good sources of omega-3s on a plant-based diet include walnuts, avocado, flax seeds and chia seeds. Omega-3s are vital for brain health and development throughout all stages of life, so don't skimp.

WHAT ARE THE DOWNSIDES OF PLANT-BASED DIETS?

Plant-based eating is a safe and healthy choice for most people, but you should talk with a health professional before making big changes to your diet. "Anyone with a history of eating disorders shouldn't follow a diet that eliminates food groups," says Alexis. "A plant-based diet in the wrong hands can be abused as another restriction diet." If that hits close to home for you, Alexis recommends experimenting with plant-based recipes, but steering clear of any strict food rules and restrictions, or labelling your eating habits.

WHAT KINDS OF FOODS SHOULD YOU LIMIT OR AVOID ON A PLANT-BASED DIET?

If you follow a vegan diet, all meat, fish, dairy and egg products are off the table. You'll also need to steer clear of sneaky ingredients, such as whey or casein (milk derivatives) and gelatin (made from animal bones), which are common in processed foods, says dietitian Ryan Maciel. If you're taking a flexible approach, though, nothing is completely off limits all the time. Whether you choose to eat animal foods once a week, once a month or once a year, it's totally up to you. Dietitian Kim Ross offers this advice. "The healthiest way to be plant-based is to limit or avoid processed animal foods, such as deli meats, processed cheese and spreads," she says. In fact, because a plant-based diet emphasises whole foods, you'll want to minimise or avoid heavily processed foods as much as possible. "Since they've been modified from their original state, they generally don't contain as many healthy nutrients and are often high in salt, sugar and additives," says Ryan. So, opt to get your protein from chickpeas and lentils instead of processed vegie burgers and other plant-based 'meats'.

It's good for your wallet, too

A plant-based diet will be a boon for your finances. "Meat and animal-based products tend to be the most expensive items on the grocery bill, so opting for plant-based proteins can help you stay on budget," says dietitian Stefani Sassos.

How do you transition to a plant-based diet?

It may sound daunting, but you just need to take it one step at a time. Here's how to ease the move.

GO SLOWLY

If you're ready to start eating more plants, Alexis recommends beginning small. "Overturning your entire diet in a day is overwhelming and lessens the likelihood of you sticking with it," she says. "Instead of jumping to extremes, pick two minor changes to implement each week." For example, at lunchtime, swap the chicken sandwich for salad and cheese.

BE REALISTIC

Remember, a plant-based diet doesn't mean you can never eat animal products again. So, instead of focusing on taking things away, "think about how you can add, to enhance your diet," says Alexis. "Research suggests that following a flexitarian diet (which increases plant-based foods and reduces, but doesn't eliminate, animal foods) yields similar health benefits, like reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes."

REPLACE COW'S MILK WITH DAIRY-FREE MILK

Whether you put a dash of milk in your morning coffee or fill up your cereal bowl, swapping the little bits of cow's milk in your life for a dairy-free alternative, such as oat milk, soy or almond milk, is an easy and approachable way to ease into a plant-based life. Look for calcium-fortified options so you don't miss out on one of dairy milk's major benefits. Just be aware, though, that some dairy-free milks can be high in sugar, so it pays to scan the nutrition info panel.

TRY MEATLESS MONDAYS

If you simply don't know where to begin, Meatless Mondays, a worldwide initiative, can be a huge help. Cutting out animal products for just one day a week is relatively easy – and can still have a profound impact on the environment and your overall health, Alexis says.

RETHINK BREKKIE

Breakfast is one of the easier meals to control, as it's quick to prepare a healthy meat-free option, such as a bowl of oats or unsweetened muesli, topped with chopped nuts, yoghurt and fruit. This will still ensure you get all the protein and nutrients you need to start your day off right.

MEET MEAT IN THE MIDDLE

If you're not yet ready to give up your favourite meat-based recipes, try swapping just half of the meat for a plant-based option. This might mean subbing half of the beef in your Bolognese sauce for kidney beans or half the chicken in your stir-fry for mushrooms.

SIZE PORTIONS WISELY

Rethink salad as a 'side' with your meal. "Fill your plate with 80 to 90 per cent plant foods, such as sweet potato, asparagus, beetroot, tomatoes and greens, and then add a small portion of fish (about 10 to 20 per cent of the plate)," Kim says. This flexitarian diet approach has also been shown to aid weight loss and lower blood pressure. ►

MORE VITAMINS TO KEEP ON YOUR RADAR

iron

The richest dietary sources of this mineral are lean meat and seafood, but it's found in nuts, beans and grains, too. Women are particularly at risk of low iron levels (we lose a bunch via menstrual bleeding), which can spell sluggishness and anxiety.

MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE WITH:
Beans and spinach

omega-3s

Cold-water fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, tuna and sardines, are rich sources of this polyunsaturated fatty acid. Research shows eating foods that include them could halve feelings of pessimism and sadness. (They can also increase libido. Second helping, please!)

MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE WITH:
Walnuts, chia, flax seeds, hemp seeds, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and soybeans

tryptophan

This amino acid has calming benefits that help produce your brain's primary feel-good hormone, serotonin.

MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE WITH:
Soybeans and mozzarella

zinc

Oysters contain more zinc per serving than any other food, but red meat and poultry contain it, too. Studies have found this mineral helps fight off the blues.

MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE WITH:
Sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, lentils and quinoa

Put these on your plate

8 ways to PUMP UP PLANT PROTEIN

Get your protein fix with these simple options.

So, you're intrigued enough to consider eating meat-free for a week, but you're still wondering, without chicken on my plate, how will I get enough protein? "This is the number one question I get about going plant-based," says nutritionist Dawn Jackson Blatner. "But you absolutely can get enough protein on a plant-based diet."

Focus on plant-based protein sources, such as beans, peas, lentils and soy products (tofu, tempeh and edamame), says Ryan. Nuts, seeds and nut butters also deliver a healthy dose of protein, along with healthy fats. The truth is that even wholegrains provide a few grams of protein per serving.

The daily recommended amount of protein is 0.8 grams per kilogram of bodyweight – so, if you weigh 68 kilos, that's about 55 grams. Here are eight plant-based proteins that make it easy to hit your mark, in descending order of protein.

1 TEMPEH

20 grams protein in about ¾ cup, cooked

Made from soybeans, this traditional Indonesian food is fermented for easier digestion and has a true meaty texture. Cook it similarly to meat: grilled, baked or pan-fried.

2 TOFU

11 grams protein per ½ cup, cooked

Tofu is made from soy milk, and it varies in texture from creamy to firm. Protein rich, it's a whole, unprocessed food and absorbs flavour beautifully. It's great in soup, patties and all stir-fries.

3 EDAMAME

9 grams protein per ½ cup, cooked

Picked when they're young and green, these soybeans are a top source of fibre, iron, calcium, zinc and B vitamins. Cook them alone for a healthy snack or fold them into vegie fried rice.

Edamame
Beans
Tofu
Tempeh
Quinoa
Oats
Chickpeas
Lentils

4 LENTILS

8 grams protein per ½ cup, cooked

Rich in folate, potassium and copper, these tasty little legumes shine in a variety of soups or can be used as a ground-beef replacement in a filling shepherd's pie or meatloaf.

5 BEANS

Up to 8 grams protein per ½ cup, cooked

Packed with protein and fibre, they have a versatile texture that can be cooked with chilli, shaped into burgers or tossed onto salads. There are more than a dozen varieties to try, so experiment!

6 CHICKPEAS

7 grams protein per ½ cup, cooked

Whether you eat them as a base for hummus, on a complex salad or in a hearty soup, chickpeas provide a wonderful nutty flavour that lingers in the mouth. They're also high in fibre.

7 OATS

5 grams protein per ½ cup, uncooked

These super-healthy grains are rich in vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. Overnight oats are an easy option, but you can also mix them into yummy smoothies, muffins or pancakes.

8 QUINOA

4 grams protein per ½ cup, cooked

This chewy grain is perfect as the base for a refreshing salad topped with vegies, beans, avocado and whatever else you have in the fridge. And quinoa pasta is delicious, too. P

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK. ILLUSTRATIONS: BROOKE LYONS

WHEN SEX HURTS

There are so many possible causes of this type of pain in women – but solutions are out there.

BY GYNAECOLOGIST DR LAUREN STREICHER

Have you ever been sexually aroused and rarin' to go only to find that attempting intercourse results in burning, knife-like searing and/or pinching pain? Then you've experienced dyspareunia, the medical word for painful intercourse. There are two types: Superficial dyspareunia refers to pain limited to the entry and walls of the vagina. Deep dyspareunia is when the penis can enter the vagina just fine, but any thrusting movement causes pain that ranges from achy to sharp to intolerable.

Many women experience both kinds of pain: during penetration and also deep in the pelvis during thrusting. The reason is simple. Even if you initially have pain only on entry, your vagina isn't stupid: It's going to try to protect itself by tightening your pelvic floor muscles to keep the penis out. If you start to have deep pain during intercourse, on the other hand, the best way for your pelvis to prevent a penis from entering is by not creating lubrication – dryness may not be the initial problem, but it becomes a protective mechanism to stop intercourse from occurring.

WHY DOES IT HURT?

Superficial dyspareunia can be caused by vaginal dryness (brought on by menopause, birth control pills and some other medications), various skin conditions that affect vulvar skin (including infections, psoriasis and lichen sclerosus, ie patchy, discoloured skin), cancer treatment or vaginismus (tightness in muscles surrounding the vaginal opening, preventing penetration).

Deep dyspareunia can be brought on by endometriosis, fibroids, irritable bowel syndrome, pelvic infections (such as chlamydia and other STIs), interstitial cystitis, and a condition called adenomyosis, in which uterine tissue burrows into the muscle of the uterine wall, resulting in an enlarged and tender uterus.

And there are other causes, too: More than 50 conditions may be responsible for painful intercourse, including gastrointestinal, urological, musculoskeletal and neurological problems. Your gynaecologist may be able to figure out the cause, but many women need to see a specialist – and finding the right one can be challenging. Your gynaecologist may not ►

> *Enduring painful sex can profoundly affect an otherwise good relationship, so it's important to communicate what's going on.*

be thinking about irritable bowel syndrome, a gastroenterologist may not be thinking about endometriosis, and nobody may be thinking about painful pelvic floor muscles.

To make things more complicated, many of these problems aren't detectable through blood tests, ultrasound or X-rays. What's required is a high level of thinking outside the box. If you're not getting answers as to why you experience persistent pelvic pain, it's worth finding a gynaecologist who deals specifically with sexual pain. Sometimes doctors can't identify the cause, which is when women are often told, "It's all in your head." But the pain isn't in your head – it's in your pelvis – and, even if it's a result of past sexual abuse or other psychosocial issues, it's treatable by a trauma-informed psychologist with expertise in this area.

GETTING TREATMENT

The first step in a physical exam for someone who's having sexual pain is an inspection of the skin covering the entire vulva as well as the area surrounding the opening of the vagina, checking for redness, change in pigmentation, sores, rashes or dryness. An internal exam will detect any pelvic masses. An evaluation of the pelvic floor is critical to determine whether muscles are painful or tight. Sometimes an ultrasound or an MRI is needed and, in rare cases, exploratory surgery is required. Only when the cause of the pain has been understood can treatment be initiated. (Note that telehealth is not an option for determining the cause of painful sex!)

Your doctor may suggest medication, hormone therapy, penis bumpers to limit the depth of penetration and, in some cases, surgery. During treatment, there may be a period during which you're told to avoid sex – though actually you just need to avoid penetration. Doing so is key: Too many women continue to have sex to please their partners despite severe pain. More than one has told me, "I feel sorry for him, so I grit my teeth and get through it." But enduring painful sex can profoundly affect an otherwise good relationship, so it's important to communicate what's going on. Many couples turn to sex therapy to address any emotional and relationship fallout.

Whatever the initial cause of the pain, when it's chronic, pelvic floor therapy is an essential part of the treatment. Muscle memory can persist even after the condition that caused the pain has been addressed. When your vagina – and, in fact, your entire pelvis – has been in protective 'keep out' mode for a long time, pelvic and vaginal muscles can continue to contract involuntarily in an attempt to prevent penetration. Pelvic therapy with a pelvic floor physiotherapist, which could include exercises and manual treatment of the muscles, allows you to have intercourse without muscles contracting painfully and inappropriately. It works and I highly recommend it.

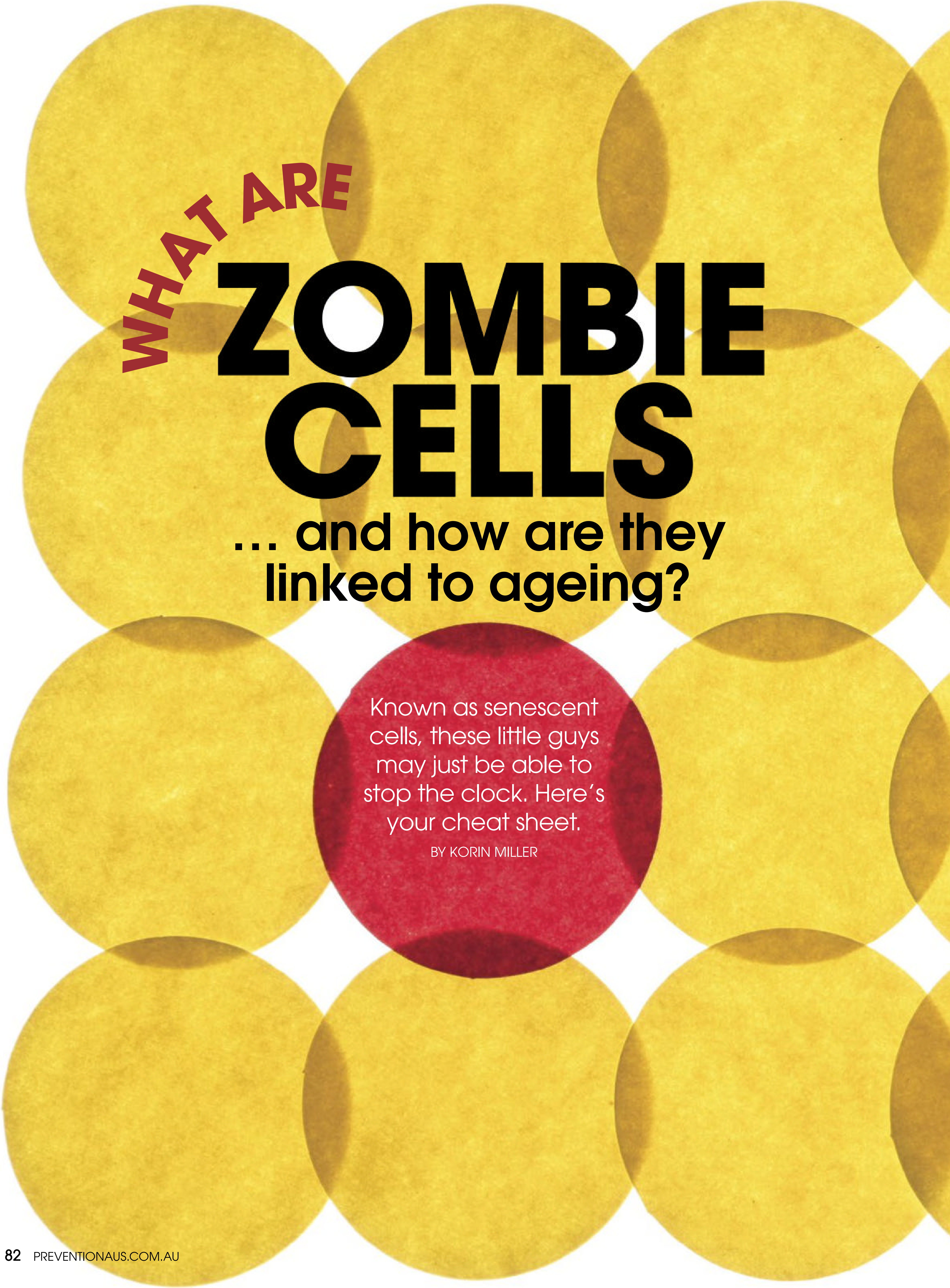
The bottom line? No one should have pain with intercourse, and no level of this is acceptable. To find a pelvic floor physiotherapist, you can either get a doctor's referral (if you want to claim the therapy on Medicare) or simply use Google to locate one near you.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Did you know?

More than 20 per cent of Australian women have experienced physical pain during sex.

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

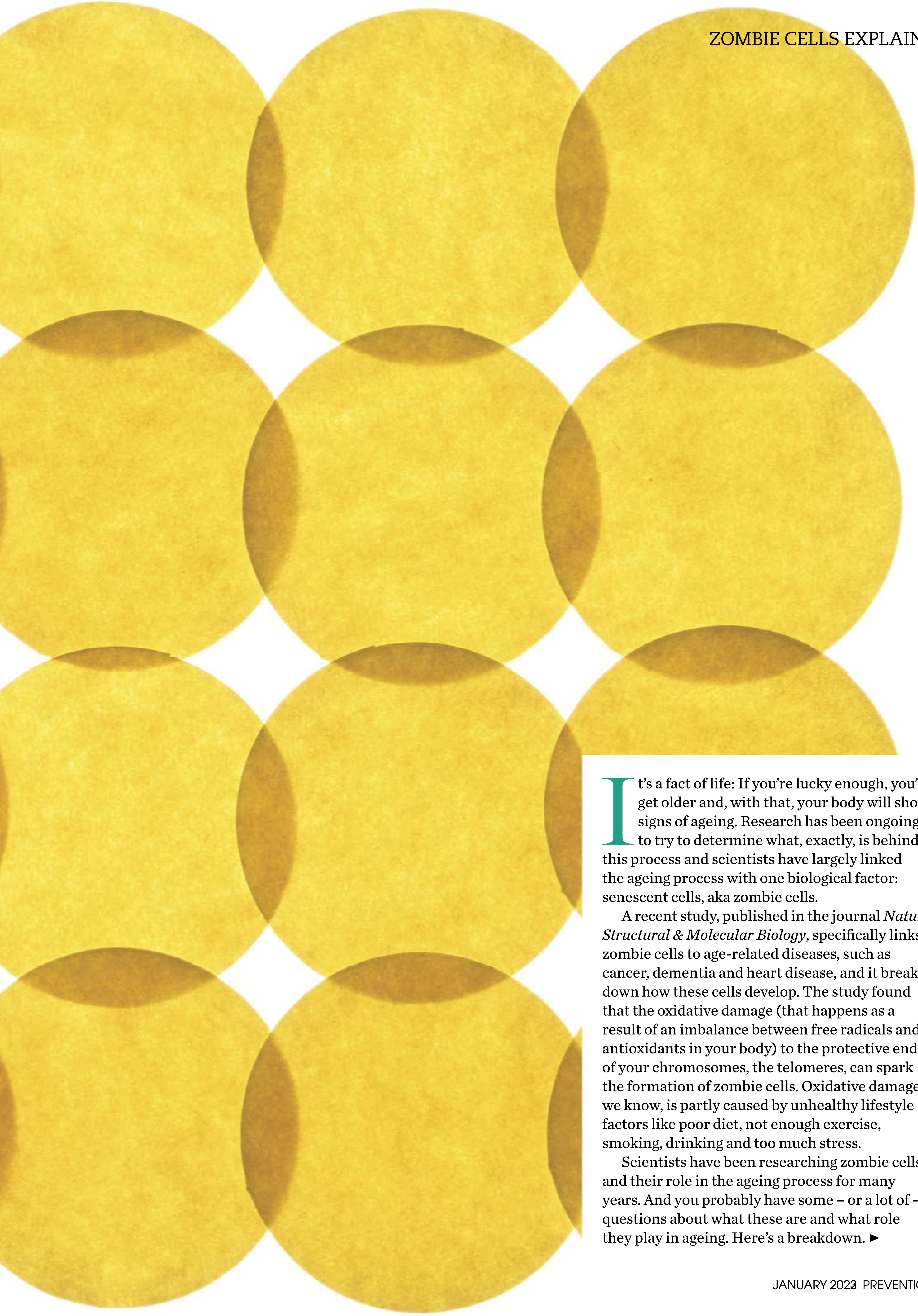


WHAT ARE ZOMBIE CELLS

… and how are they linked to ageing?

Known as senescent cells, these little guys may just be able to stop the clock. Here's your cheat sheet.

BY KORIN MILLER



It's a fact of life: If you're lucky enough, you'll get older and, with that, your body will show signs of ageing. Research has been ongoing to try to determine what, exactly, is behind this process and scientists have largely linked the ageing process with one biological factor: senescent cells, aka zombie cells.

A recent study, published in the journal *Nature Structural & Molecular Biology*, specifically links zombie cells to age-related diseases, such as cancer, dementia and heart disease, and it breaks down how these cells develop. The study found that the oxidative damage (that happens as a result of an imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants in your body) to the protective ends of your chromosomes, the telomeres, can spark the formation of zombie cells. Oxidative damage, we know, is partly caused by unhealthy lifestyle factors like poor diet, not enough exercise, smoking, drinking and too much stress.

Scientists have been researching zombie cells and their role in the ageing process for many years. And you probably have some – or a lot of – questions about what these are and what role they play in ageing. Here's a breakdown. ►

Did you know?

Your body makes about 3.8 million red blood cells every second.

SOURCE: WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

WHAT ARE THEY?

Before we explain zombie cells, it's important to quickly recap how cells in your body work. In a fundamental process for life, a cell duplicates all of its contents and splits to form two identical cells. When this process doesn't work accurately, you can develop health problems like cancer. Zombie cells, aka senescent cells, are cells that stop dividing. When you're younger, your immune system spots these cells and eliminates them from your body, explains GP Dr Sabrina Barata. But, as you get older, your immune system doesn't have as large a capacity to do this.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Zombie cells simply stick around in your body. "They don't die – they become resistant to death," says researcher Dr Paul Robbins, an expert on the biology of ageing and metabolism. "They stay in your body forever." These cells release certain molecules that can spark inflammation and even harm other cells, Dr Robbins says. They've also been linked to the growth of cancerous cells.

Just to confuse things, zombie cells are seen as an anti-cancer mechanism because they stop cells that may have become abnormal from continuing to replicate. So, it's complicated, and researchers are still unravelling the science.

DOES EVERYONE HAVE ZOMBIE CELLS?

"I would hypothesise that, yes, everyone has these cells," Dr Robbins says. "And older people or people with chronic diseases may have more." In essence, cells stop dividing after they've divided so many times or acquire so many mutations that they're at risk of becoming abnormal or potentially making you sick.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

HOW ARE ZOMBIE CELLS RELATED TO AGEING?

Zombie cells become more common as people age. "Your immune system gets rid of these cells when you're young, but, when you get older, it can't clear them as effectively," Dr Robbins explains. But, in promising new tests, scientists have found that tinkering with these cells can help extend life – in mice, at least. Landmark research in the US actually removed zombie cells from living mice. The team discovered that injecting a certain drug triggered the death of these zombie cells.

In follow-up research, the scientists found that treating mice to remove zombie cells extended their median lifespans by 17 to 42 per cent, depending on the mice's sex, diet and genetic background. The mice that were treated also usually looked healthier than those that weren't looked at and were more likely to have spontaneous activity and explore things – signs of youth.

> " If we understand why senescent cells happen and how to reverse them, we have the ability to have healthier ageing with less debility.

COULD STUDYING ZOMBIE CELLS BE THE KEY TO LIVING A LONGER LIFE?

That's what doctors think right now. "If we understand why senescent cells happen and how to reverse them, we have the ability to have healthier ageing with less debility," says neurologist Dr Santosh Kesari.

Dr Robbins points out that zombie cells are "interconnected" with other "things that go wrong as we age". Those include changes in metabolism and dysfunction in your stem cells (which affects your brain) and your mitochondria, which generate energy to power your cells, he says. "If one of these things are affected, the others are, too," Dr Robbins says. "They're all linked." Meaning, if you can target and wipe out zombie cells, your metabolism and energy may improve, he says.

Dr Barata says that studying these cells can "absolutely" help lead to advances in healthy ageing. "If we can find a way to kill off these cells, they won't accumulate in the body," she says. "That will protect us from diseases like dementia, certain cancers and cardiovascular disease."

Currently, research is ongoing to study the impact of targeting zombie cells and certain diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease, osteoarthritis and diabetes. And the breakthrough is close. "We'll know their impact within a few years," Dr Robbins says. P

How to really relax

Nothing calms the mind quite like a meditation session – but how do you do it? Here are three ways to get started.

BY NICOL NATALE

Does your mind race? Do you feel stressed and distracted a lot of the time? Do you wish you could just slow down? We're never taught how to calm a restless mind, but there's a simple way to teach yourself to do so at any stage of life. "A daily meditation practice improves both your ability to return to the present moment and also your response to now," says clinical psychologist Dr Lori Ryland. It can profoundly ease stress, boost your sleep and help you feel more focused and present.

Before you begin, note that there's no wrong way to meditate. The three practices here are meant to help you explore meditation to see what might bring you the most peace.

PRACTICE #1

DO A BODY SCAN

How is your body feeling right now? Does your stomach feel anxious, or are your shoulders tense? We spend so much time in our heads that we can lose touch with our physical presence. By tuning in to your body in this moment, you've just done a simple body scan, a type of meditation that calls you to pay attention to your body and notice any physical or emotional sensations. Daily mental stress can lead to subconscious physical tension and tightness in the body, and body scan meditation can help release these by centering your focus on one body part at a time, says meditation expert Rach Junard. In addition to helping you become present, leave behind the monkey-chatter in your mind and direct your focus to various parts of your body, studies have shown that doing a body scan meditation can help you reduce stress and get better sleep. Plus, chronic pain sufferers who listened to a 10-minute guided body scan meditation reported decreased levels of pain, according to a study published in the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*.

HOW TO DO... A BODY SCAN MEDITATION

STEP 1: LIE DOWN ON A MAT OR OTHER COMFORTABLE SURFACE. Close your eyes or maintain a soft gaze to limit any visual distraction.

STEP 2: TAKE SOME DEEP BREATHS. Slowly inhale through your nose and focus on the breath expanding your belly and chest. Slowly exhale through your nose, emptying your lungs completely. As you continue, pay attention to bodily sensations, starting with your feet and moving up.

STEP 3: OBSERVE THESE SENSATIONS AND FEELINGS. Let yourself notice any sensations without judgment. As you scan slowly from your feet through your ankles, your shins, your knees and each body part all the way to the crown of your head, offer nurturing language to yourself with every exhale. This helps you stay present. Try phrases like "I love my feet" and "I love my belly."

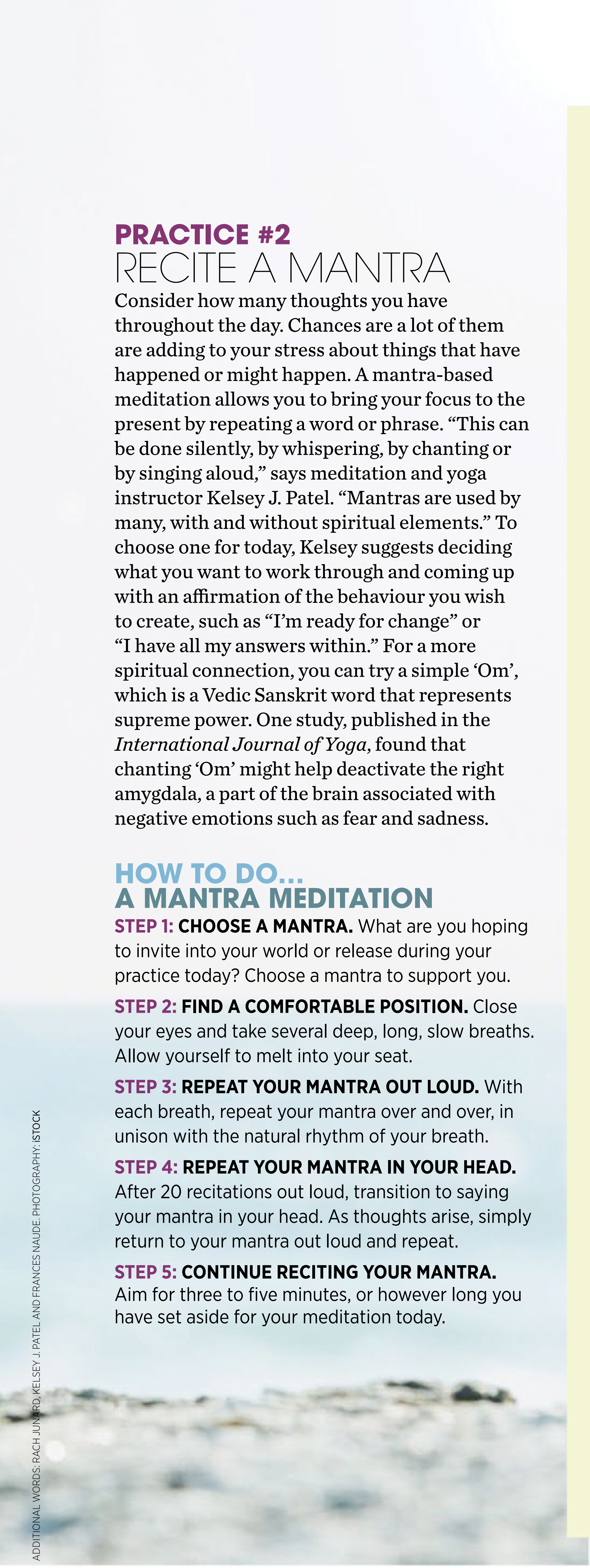
STEP 4: BRING YOUR AWARENESS BACK TO YOUR SPACE. When you're ready, let your breath bring your awareness back into the room. Gently move your fingers and toes. Move your chin from side to side.

STEP 5: OFFER YOURSELF A HUG. You can do this by drawing your hands to the opposite shoulders, and then say to yourself, "Thank you for listening." ►

Did you know?

Just five minutes per day of focused breathing can help reduce anxiety.

As well as beating stress, meditation boosts immunity and can even help reduce body pain.



PRACTICE #2
RECITE A MANTRA

Consider how many thoughts you have throughout the day. Chances are a lot of them are adding to your stress about things that have happened or might happen. A mantra-based meditation allows you to bring your focus to the present by repeating a word or phrase. "This can be done silently, by whispering, by chanting or by singing aloud," says meditation and yoga instructor Kelsey J. Patel. "Mantras are used by many, with and without spiritual elements." To choose one for today, Kelsey suggests deciding what you want to work through and coming up with an affirmation of the behaviour you wish to create, such as "I'm ready for change" or "I have all my answers within." For a more spiritual connection, you can try a simple 'Om', which is a Vedic Sanskrit word that represents supreme power. One study, published in the *International Journal of Yoga*, found that chanting 'Om' might help deactivate the right amygdala, a part of the brain associated with negative emotions such as fear and sadness.

HOW TO DO...
A MANTRA MEDITATION

STEP 1: CHOOSE A MANTRA. What are you hoping to invite into your world or release during your practice today? Choose a mantra to support you.

STEP 2: FIND A COMFORTABLE POSITION. Close your eyes and take several deep, long, slow breaths. Allow yourself to melt into your seat.

STEP 3: REPEAT YOUR MANTRA OUT LOUD. With each breath, repeat your mantra over and over, in unison with the natural rhythm of your breath.

STEP 4: REPEAT YOUR MANTRA IN YOUR HEAD. After 20 recitations out loud, transition to saying your mantra in your head. As thoughts arise, simply return to your mantra out loud and repeat.

STEP 5: CONTINUE RECITING YOUR MANTRA. Aim for three to five minutes, or however long you have set aside for your meditation today.

PRACTICE #3
VISUALISATION

Remember how easy it was to dream up imaginary worlds when you were a kid? That same technique is used to do a visualisation meditation. Imagining a calming place or a pleasant experience can lead to a range of emotional and physical benefits, says yoga and health coach Frances Naude. Visualising a task can even make you more successful at completing it, according to a 2017 study published in *Psychology*. Visualisation meditation provides you with a momentary escape from reality and it naturally reduces stress and anxiety, a study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* found. Frances says this type of meditation is great for beginners. "Many times people give up their meditation practice because they struggle to stop their thoughts from flowing through their minds," she says. "While this is 100 per cent normal, it can be very frustrating and disheartening." With visualisation, you're able to drop into a meditative state through attention, not silence: "By giving the mind something to focus on, you naturally quiet the 'noise' and you're more likely to find that quietness through the imagery journey."

While you can choose to visualise something you hope to accomplish, focus today on using visualisation to elicit an emotion – in this case, a sense of peace. So, what brings you calmness? Our instructions will focus on the beach, but the beauty of visualisation is that you can choose any environment that suits you.

HOW TO DO...
A VISUALISATION MEDITATION

Read through the steps, then go through them in your own way. It's okay if you don't remember the exact words, but focus on the senses you're experiencing as you visualise.

STEP 1: PREPARE YOUR MIND AND YOUR BODY. Sit or lie down and then set an intention: For today, it can be to calm your mind for peace. Our environment will be a warm beach with tall palm trees, crystal blue water and vibrant coral reefs. You may want to set a timer for 10 minutes, or you may prefer to remain in this state for the amount of time that serves you best. Let your intuition guide you.

STEP 2: VISUALISE. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Start to smell the salty air and feel the warm wind. Imagine sand underneath you, palm leaves rustling in the wind and the gentle lapping of the waves. Notice all that surrounds you and, when you're ready, envision yourself standing up. Walk mindfully to the ocean, letting the warm water kiss your toes. Maybe you want to dive in. If so, feel the gentle sway and support of the ocean. When you're ready, walk out of the water and notice how you're warmed by the sun. Walk, observing shells, birds, dolphins and other magical sights. It's just you and this place, perfectly at peace. Continue to be here, doing whatever feels the most calming and enjoyable. Remember, there's no right or wrong way to practise this.

STEP 3: GENTLY BRING YOUR AWARENESS BACK TO YOUR BODY. When you're ready to leave (or when your timer goes off), sit or lie down on the beach and gently feel the visualisation dissipate as you return to your current state. Bring your awareness back to your body and surroundings, grounding yourself with your new-found sense of peace. Recognise how your mind feels calm and be grateful for your practice. **P**

ADDITIONAL WORDS: RACH JUNARD, KELSEY J. PATEL AND FRANCES NAUDE. PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

The FRIEND who SAVED ME

Sabrina Rogers-Anderson's best friend has been by her side through twins, cancer and has rescued her from hitting rock bottom more times than she can count. Here, Sabrina tells the touching story of their powerful friendship.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Opposite, from top: Sabrina (left) with Amber in Sydney; as maid of honour at Amber's wedding.

> "She gave off such a friendly and captivating vibe that I knew I had to make her my friend."

When I landed in Australia in 2007 with a working holiday visa and a taste for adventure, I had a vague plan to find a job somewhere and enjoy everything this stunning country had to offer. I'd left my career, family and friends behind in Canada and I had no idea when I'd go back.

A few weeks later, I was hired as a web editor for a major magazine in Sydney. I couldn't believe my eyes when I turned up on the first day! Dozens of glamorous women clicked their heels through the lobby of the skyscraper that housed some of the most prestigious publications in the country. I was 29 years old and living the dream.

When I sat down at my desk, I noticed Amber right away. She was the photo editor there and she was stunning inside and out. She gave off such a friendly and captivating vibe that I knew I had to make her my friend. We chatted casually a few times in the office and I finally asked her if she'd like to catch up after work on what we now refer to as our 'first date'. Over dinner at a trendy pub, we couldn't stop laughing hysterically. We bonded over our shared love of gummy bears and were inseparable from that day on. ►

From top: Sabrina (left) on her wedding day with maid of honour Amber; Sabrina's twin girls get a helping hand from Amber on their way to school.

Maids of honour

A year later, Amber and I moved in together. She had a serious boyfriend and I'd also started dating someone, but nothing could keep "the gummies" apart. We went out for drinks, had movie nights at home and annoyed the neighbours with our incessant chatter.

When her partner proposed and she asked me to be her maid of honour, I was as overjoyed as if it was my own wedding! Needless to say, Amber was also my maid of honour when I married Paul a couple of years later.

Shortly after my nuptials, Amber announced that she was pregnant. I was beside myself with excitement and couldn't wait to be an auntie. When her daughter, Ava, was born, I felt a bond that I'd never felt with another child before and I couldn't get enough cuddles.

An unexpected storm

One day, when Ava was about five months old, Amber called me. She was hysterical. Her husband had left her out of the blue and she was a mess. I jumped in the car and drove straight to her house. There was nowhere else in the world I could be in that moment. Over the next few months, Amber struggled as she tried to come to terms with being a mother and losing the 'family' she'd always dreamt about in one fell swoop. It was incredibly difficult seeing her in so much pain, but I supported her the only way I knew how: by listening. We texted hundreds of times a day and I was by her side as often as I could.

Amber eventually came out the other side, met a wonderful new man, remarried and had a second child. It makes me so happy to see her thriving. But, to this day, she tells me that I saved her all those years ago when she was going through that dark period.

And then there were twins

In 2013, I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Arabella. I loved her with every fibre of myself, but being a new mum was hard and I was sleep-deprived and anxious. Every time I felt overwhelmed, I reached out to Amber because she always knew the right thing to say.

Then, shortly after Arabella's second birthday, we found out I was pregnant again... with twin girls! Paul and I were overjoyed, but we also knew that we had to make some serious changes because Sydney was too busy and expensive with three children under three. So, we decided to move to the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. I'll never forget the look on Amber's face when I told her the big news. She was clearly devastated, but she also wanted to support me unconditionally above all else. She hugged me and told me that we'd visit each other often. My heart was broken because I was leaving 'my person' behind.

My turn for marriage troubles

While I loved my new life on the Sunshine Coast, I missed my bestie every day. Raising three young children without family nearby had started to take a toll on my marriage, so I leant on Amber as we tried to work things out. She was always there for me with endless words of support and wisdom. We visited each other as often as we could and planned annual 'gummy trips'. As we sat around our hotel pool in Byron Bay in New South Wales in February 2020, we discussed the new virus that was all over the news and debated whether it would affect us. A month later, the whole country was locked down.

Even though we couldn't see each other in person, Amber and I continued to support each other by text and phone through the ups and downs of the pandemic. We even had a five-hour Zoom call one evening! Like many marriages that weren't rock solid to begin with, mine didn't

> “Amber wanted nothing more than to be by my side as I went through [cancer] treatment.”

‘The gummies’ celebrated Sabrina’s last infusion in the chemo unit with a little champagne.

improve during COVID. But, Amber was always there for me as I debated my options.

A shock cancer diagnosis

In October 2020, I had a routine mammogram. Even though I was only 43, I’d decided to get screened every two years because my mum had survived breast cancer. I was about six months late for this one because the breast screen clinic had been shut down due to COVID when I’d received a reminder. To this day, I don’t know if what transpired could’ve been prevented.

Three malignant tumours were found in my left breast. The next few weeks were a blur as I saw countless specialists, who explained the different phases of my treatment. I needed surgery to remove my breast, six months of chemotherapy and 28 days of radiation. And there was the possibility of more surgery depending on the results. But, all the doctors told me I’d be fine, so I forged ahead with my usual stubborn determination.

My bestie to the rescue

Amber wanted nothing more than to be by my side as I went through treatment, but the borders kept opening and shutting again with every new outbreak. She managed to get a flight up to be with me for my first chemo infusion, but she had to leave in a panic the next day, because rumours were swirling that the borders would shut again and we didn’t want her to miss Christmas with her family. On the day of my very last infusion, Amber was sitting by my side in the chemo unit. The nurses had told us we could bring champagne, so we sipped on bubbly and tried not to annoy the other chemo patients with our giddiness. We spent the night at a nearby hotel and celebrated my milestone.

In the meantime, my marriage with Paul had come to an end. While I was undergoing treatment, I organised a house purchase and a move. Even though our split was amicable and my ex was very supportive, I won’t lie – it was a lot to juggle on top of raising three young kids. When I finally moved into my new home in August last year, I was utterly exhausted.

I spent the next few months slowly rebuilding myself mentally and physically. Through all these hardships, Amber was with me every step of the way. Even when I couldn’t muster an ounce of positivity despite my usual optimistic mindset, she never made me feel like I was a burden or too much. She listened patiently and offered me unwavering support.

Amber says I saved her all those years ago, but she’s the one who saved me – and continues to save me every day. I’m happy to report that things are looking up in both our lives right now, but I know that, no matter what life throws at us, we’ll always get through it together.

NEED TO SUPPORT A FRIEND?

Psychiatrist Dr Lisa Myers shares her top tips for helping a bestie who’s struggling:

- Listen attentively and really try to understand where your friend is at.
- Offer gentle support and guidance that’s aligned with what they need without pushing your agenda.
- Give them a safe space to share and talk.
- Offer to help your friend in any other way that could lighten their load. This is particularly helpful if their situation can’t be changed or fixed.
- Support and direct them in getting the best possible help, whether that’s a doctor, therapist, exercise or other treatments.

Why the spike in WOMEN WITH ADHD?

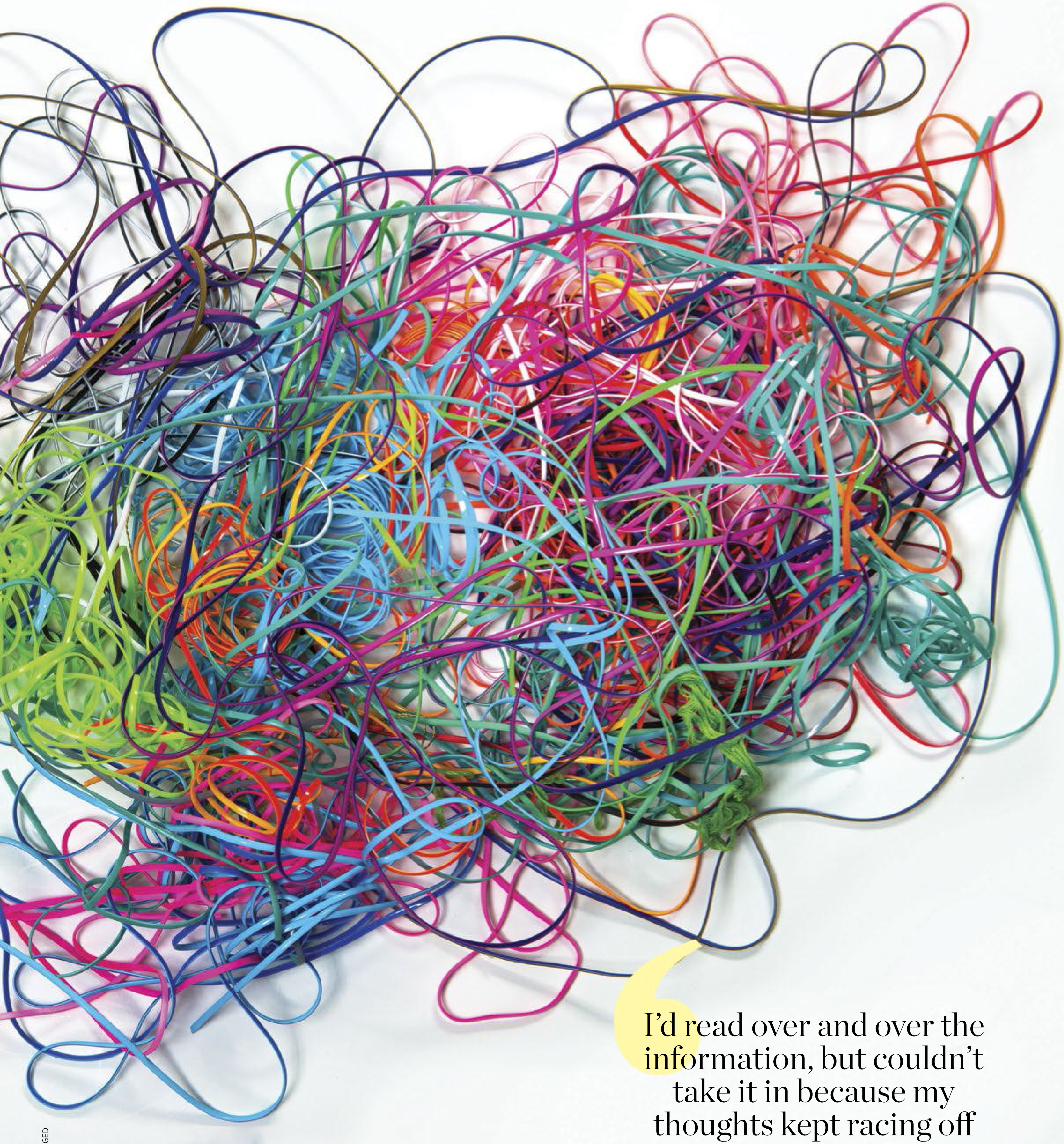
With more and more women being diagnosed with adult attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, we explore why this condition seems to be on the rise.

BY STEPHANIE OSFIELD

When she was 10 years old, Natalie's* primary school teacher told her mother: "Natalie could be anything she wants to be if only she had someone to organise her." "I've thought about that comment quite a lot since I was diagnosed in 2021 with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder [ADHD]," says Natalie, 36, who works in the travel industry. "I've done fine in my job, but, with the right support and treatment back then, maybe I would've finished both the fine arts course and design course that I started but dropped out of in my 20s," she says.

"I had a dream of becoming an illustrator, but the study felt exhausting and frustrating. I'd read over and over the information, but couldn't take it in because my thoughts kept racing off and distracting me." Getting her diagnosis sooner would also have prevented years of self-criticism, over her lack of time management skills and constant forgetfulness. "Ten times a day I'd be looking for where I put my swipe card at work," Natalie explains. "When I made up the baby formula, I'd have to count out loud how many scoops I put in the bottle, otherwise every single time I'd lose track. As I couldn't remember to take the contraceptive pill every day, I've had to opt for a hormone implant. My husband has had to be the one who handles all our bills."

Excessive inattentiveness is a common symptom of ADHD and a red flag that leads women to be screened for the condition in adulthood. By this stage, they may have spent years masking their condition while harbouring huge shame and embarrassment about behaviour blips – like turning up to a doctor's appointment late or on the wrong day. Again. Or being a 'no show' to pick up the kids. Again. ►



> I'd read over and over the information, but couldn't take it in because my thoughts kept racing off and distracting me.

*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

Many undiagnosed women spend years masking their ADHD or avoiding activities that spotlight their symptoms.

?
TRY AGAIN!!
Page 5
PTO
PTO
45
TRY THIS
9.00
10
Page 26
NOTES
NO GOOD
Page 4
YES
Page 14
NICE IDEA
?

For years, on her popular news and lifestyle website mamamia.com.au, media personality Mia Freedman, 51, fessed up about forgetting to pick her kids up from school or sport or play dates. Though it was a running joke in her family, she admitted these moments gave her bad mother guilt. So, when she was recently diagnosed with ADHD at 49, it proved a major 'aha' moment.

"Behavioural quirks that I'd had all my life were growing into obstacles and then liabilities," wrote Mia as she described escalating symptoms that now included having more minor car accidents (including backing into her son's car twice in a few months in her driveway). She was also missing more meetings and then struggling to stay on message when she turned up. "It was impossible to concentrate, my thoughts flicking around incessantly, unable to land on any one thread for more than a few seconds," Mia says.

BRINGING IT TO ATTENTION

Only months before, Aussie author, performer and radio personality Em Rusciano had also revealed her 2021 ADHD diagnosis. "I'd always joked that I had ADHD because of my relentless ambition, fast brain, impulsivity, rubbish memory, inability to regulate my emotions, complete lack of organisational skills and inability to speak at a normal pace," Em, 43, joked when delivering her emotional 2022 National Press Club address in Canberra. Yet, though she remembers feeling inadequate because she couldn't ace spelling bees or recite her times tables, when it came to art, sport and drama, Em excelled.

It's a common story mirrored by other celebs with ADHD, such as American Olympic gymnast Simone Biles, actor and comedian Jim Carrey, actress Zooey Deschanel and singer Justin Timberlake. "Many people with ADHD end up doing very well in creative or sporting careers," says Associate Professor John Kramer, chair of a special interest group for the Royal Australian College of GPs that supports research and education into conditions like ADHD.

"It's a big myth that if you have ADHD you can't focus on *anything*," says Natalie, who was always very good at printmaking and ceramics. "To manage my symptoms over the years, I've had to become very pedantic. So, if a work task requires thorough checking and accuracy, I do it well, but I have to minimise distractions around me. I've since learnt that this hyper-focus is common in people with ADHD – so, at home, I can really lose myself in playing classical ►

While ADHD begins in childhood, about 15 per cent of Aussies continue to have ADHD as adults.

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

UNDER THE RADAR

Flashback 30 years and ADHD, which was then called attention deficit disorder (ADD), was usually diagnosed in boys who talked fast, acted out and lacked focus. "Meanwhile, girls with the condition who sat looking out the window were often overlooked even though they too weren't concentrating and their learning was often falling behind," says Associate Professor Kramer. "So, any current rise in diagnosis of women is a correction, because, for decades, girls with ADHD have been slipping through the net."

"About three boys for every girl have ADHD," agrees Dr Tamara May, a psychologist and research fellow at Monash University in Melbourne, who specialises in ADHD. "But, in adulthood, a similar number of men and women have ADHD. What this likely means is that many girls with ADHD weren't recognised in childhood."

The knock-on effects can be major, causing multiple job changes, relationship breakdowns and even self-medication with alcohol or substances like cannabis, often to deal with anxiety, which is a lesser-known symptom of this 'neurodevelopmental' condition, which affects brain function, but the 'how' of this is not well understood. And half of those affected never grow out of it. For decades, we've relied on overseas medical manuals to guide ADHD diagnosis and these only started recognising adult ADHD diagnosis 10 years ago. But, in 2022, after two years of development, new Australian ADHD diagnosis guidelines have been released after approval from our National Health and Medical Research Council. When experts and people with ADHD looked at all the latest evidence for the guidelines, "It was clear that what urgently needs to be addressed are the girls slipping through the net and the women still going undiagnosed," says Dr May, who worked as project manager on the new guidelines.

Detractors say the spike in adult diagnosis is just a trend and that we're medicalising totally normal life blips like forgetfulness, brain fog and anxiety, which affect most modern women, because we're under the pump 24/7. "This misses the reality of the huge impacts of ADHD and the rigour of diagnosis," says Dr May. "To be diagnosed with adult ADHD, symptoms must be chronic, affect function and quality of life and be evident in two settings, such as work and home."

Did you know?

ADHD has been linked to greater creativity and divergent thinking.

SOURCE: NEUROSCIENCE & BIOBEHAVIORAL REVIEWS

guitar or doing ink cartoon drawings of very busy, detailed scenes. Yet the phone might ring and, during a conversation with a girlfriend, I might then interrupt constantly and impatiently finish her sentences."

DIGGING INTO YOUR PAST FOR ANSWERS

ADHD has three main sub-types. Some people are more hyperactive/impulsive, some mostly inattentive and others, like Em, have a mixture of both. "This means I have a really fast brain and live in a dream world all the time," she said in her press club delivery. Many undiagnosed women spend years masking their ADHD or avoiding activities that spotlight their symptoms. But, the wheels may start to fall off in their 30s, 40s and 50s when they're juggling career, kids and, sometimes, ageing parents, too, and may start really struggling to keep all the balls in the air.

Often people with ADHD become less hyperactive with age, but also more inattentive or restless. "At this point, women's symptoms may mistakenly be put down to postnatal depression or perimenopause or menopause," says Associate Professor Kramer. "They're also at higher risk of being misdiagnosed with bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder and anxiety disorder, which might lead them to be prescribed medications that don't work because they're being treated for the wrong condition."

The turning point often comes when a child is diagnosed with ADHD, which often kicks in around age 12. "When looking back, Mia described her younger self as "impatient, obsessive, anxious, impulsive, restless, fidgety and with a pathological fear of stillness." These childhood symptoms add an important piece to the puzzle of adult ADHD diagnosis.

Screening involves a big-picture approach that takes in everything from school reports and cognitive assessments to questionnaires. "As there's a strong genetic tendency, it's now standard practice after a child is diagnosed to ask if another family member shows signs of the condition," says Associate Professor Kramer. This was how Vivian Dunstan, 56, who now runs ADHD Support Australia, ended up being screened and diagnosed; her 14-year-old daughter was found to have ADHD first. "For years I'd wondered if I was on the spectrum, because I felt I could be scatty and, though I often feel I live at warp speed, I'm really terrible with time – repeatedly mixing up the time I have to arrive at an appointment with the time I have to leave," Vivian says. "Luckily, my partner, who I've been with since I was 18, covers for me – he gets me up in the mornings and, if we go on holiday, he makes all the bookings and gets us to the airport on time. Otherwise, I'd most likely miss the flight. It's like my brain is going at a different speed to other people and I've felt like that since I was a kid – which is why I loved gymnastics because I could jump around and burn off energy."

MANAGING THE SYMPTOMS

Stimulant medication, such as Ritalin and dexamphetamine, can be a life-changer for adults with significant ADHD symptoms. It impacts dopamine and norepinephrine, brain chemicals linked to attention and focus. "We also recommend support from psychologists and specialised ADHD coaches," says Associate Professor Kramer. "They can help newly diagnosed women increase their repertoire of coping approaches, which may include lists, regular routines and setting rituals linking two tasks together so they remember to do them."

"Since taking medication, I've felt calmer, less chaotic and less teary and I'm also less distracted, so I find it much easier to focus," says Natalie. "I can now even fold the washing without going off and leaving it half done – this might sound like no big thing, but it's a huge deal for me. There's also less chatter in my head, which no longer feels like it's spinning all the time. It may have come late, but being diagnosed with ADHD as an adult has been a relief and has improved my self-esteem and quality of life."

For more information on ADHD, visit adhdsupportaustralia.com.au

You can also download the new ADHD diagnosis guidelines from the Australian ADHD Professionals Association at adhdguideline.aadpa.com.au/download

> It may have come late, but being diagnosed with ADHD as an adult has been a relief.

Could you have ADHD?

ADHD involves more than forgetting where you put your glasses or impulsively buying a new Prada bag. According to psychologist and ADHD specialist Dr Tamara May, there are three main sub-types and the symptoms can substantially impact a person's quality of life:

1. INATTENTIVE: This causes forgetfulness, difficulty organising and planning, seemingly careless mistakes, lack of attention to detail and trouble focusing and sustaining attention.

2. HYPERACTIVE/IMPULSIVE: This can lead to constant restlessness, a busy mind, difficulty sitting still, fidgeting, impatience and being overly talkative and interrupting others.

3. COMBINATION: This means that people have a mix of both inattentive and hyperactive/impulsive symptoms.

If you think you might have undiagnosed ADHD, talk to your GP about being screened, also known as a diagnostic evaluation.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

Take in the magnificent natural formations on the world-class Cape to Cape walk, near the red-tinged Wilyabrup Cliffs in Margaret River, Western Australia.

Coast of living

Live it up, and get a new lease on life, at some of Australia's most majestic coastline destinations.

BY UTE JUNKER

PHOTOGRAPHY: TOURISM WA

Finished off yet another year in 'living to work' mode? It's time to reverse that and embrace life again! Celebrate new beginnings and a new year ahead by letting loose at one of these sublime coastline getaways, where spectacular landscapes, soothing sea air and tantalising experiences await. ►

Get off the beaten track *in Margaret River, WA*

It's a hot summer afternoon. The cicadas are buzzing, the scent of eucalypt hangs heavy in the still air and Hamish Gibson, from Cape to Cape Explorer Tours (capetocapetours.com.au), knows exactly where he wants to be. "Plunging into Chapman Pool and then resting in the shade of a tree is a beautiful feeling," he says.

Never heard of Chapman Pool? There's good reason. Hidden away in the Blackwood National Park, about 20 minutes inland from the townships of Margaret River or Augusta in Western Australia's South West Coast, this bush-fringed waterhole is something of a local secret – and it's not the only one. Few visitors realise that the tall forests of Margaret River are interlaced with a web of waterways that offer the perfect summer playground. The still waters of the Margaret River itself are the perfect place to try your hand at canoeing – not least because motorised craft are banned from these waters. "Particularly in the morning, when the water is often super still, the reflection of the treescape in the water is a wonderful thing to see," Hamish says.

Whether you opt for splashing about in the water or something a trifle more adventurous – the area's limestone ridges offer some amazing places to go rock climbing or abseiling, including Brides Cave with its glorious forest setting – you'll be doing yourself good simply by breathing in the forest air. Indeed, numerous studies have shown that time spent among the trees is a sure-fire way to bring your stress levels down and boost your wellbeing.

Exploring Margaret River's bushscapes also lets you expand your understanding of our First Peoples. Take Cape to Cape Explorer Tours' range of day hikes and multi-day trips, which include the iconic 125-kilometre Cape to Cape Track, stretching between Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin. "The walking tracks in this part of the world are often the paths used by the Wadandi and Bibbulmun people," Hamish explains. "They understood the area's micro-climates and knew the best places to gain shelter, to hunt, to perform ceremonies." They also understood the rich variety of the plant life around them – the area is known for its biodiversity, including an extraordinary array of wildflowers, as well as the strong native wisteria, which they used like twine, and the banskias, which were used to carry fire safely.

Let your worries float away in a rock pool at Boranup Beach, near Margaret River. **Opposite, from top:** Get among the trees in the Boranup Karri Forest, part of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park; take a guided canoe tour along the tranquil Margaret River.

PHOTOGRAPHY: TOURISM WA

More things to do in MARGARET RIVER

EAT Bush tucker is known for containing lots of nutrients and flavour. Taste indigenous savours like wattle seed, rosella fruit and kangaroo on a tour with the Aboriginal-owned Koomal Dreaming (koomaldreaming.com.au).
DO With plenty of surf and swimming beaches to choose from, you can always find a welcoming stretch of sand. Ask a local to recommend their favourite swim spot.
STAY Fall asleep to the sounds of the wind whispering through the leaves at Olio Bello olive farm (oliobello.com), which also offers lakeside glamping. ►

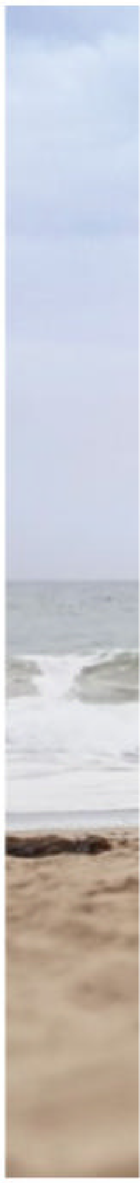
Cut loose in the Shoalhaven, NSW

As our lives get busier, we all too often forget to make time for the things that used to bring us great happiness. How long has it been since you enjoyed a fiercely fought game of netball with colleagues, spent the evening with your friends dancing to your favourite tunes, or climbed on the back of a horse for a canter?

If the latter has piqued your interest, then the Shoalhaven, on the South Coast of New South Wales, has a special treat in store – the chance to thunder down a beach on horseback. "So many people have that experience on their bucket list and they get so excited when they learn they can do it in the Shoalhaven," says Michelle Bishop, owner of the sumptuous Bangalay Luxury Villas (bangalayvillas.com.au).

This exhilarating equine adventure – you'll feel the salt spray flying past your face as the horses' hooves drum on the sand – is one of the highlights of a stay in the Shoalhaven, but there are plenty of others. Sitting between the Illawarra to the north and the Sapphire Coast to the south, the Shoalhaven has a range of diverse landscapes in which you can get out and get active. "You have the beaches, but you also have

Wake up just footsteps from the beach at the award-winning Bangalay Luxury Villas in Shoalhaven Heads. **Top:** Challenge yourself with an awe-inspiring abseiling adventure with Outdoor Raw.



green hills rolling down to the coast and steep escarpments – the scenery here is just incredible," Michelle says.

Got a head for heights? There are unbeatable views to be had when you go rock climbing or abseiling on the Nowra escarpment. Climbers come from around the world to experience these crags; if you want a really memorable experience, you can book a 'cliffnic' – feasting on local produce while suspended from a clifftop – with Outdoor Raw (outdoorraw.com.au).

For less extreme activities that'll still put a smile on your face, try paddling down the magnificent Shoalhaven River or stretching your legs on one of the region's many tracks and trails. Some of the loveliest can be found at Bundanon, the estate that was the former home of painter Arthur Boyd, where the breathtaking views inspired some of his most famous works.

When it's time to zen out, a spot of birdwatching is the answer. "There's an estuary here that's like an international bird airport – birds nest there; some have come all the way from Siberia," Michelle says. "Just sitting and watching them leaves you feeling so calm and relaxed." ►

From top: Soak up a sunset – and the beautiful Shoalhaven River – from Hanging Rock Lookout in Nowra; feel the rush on Bangalay Luxury Villas' thrilling horse ride experience on Seven Mile Beach.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (LEFT PAGE, FROM TOP) DESTINATION NSW; DEANNA GERLACH; (RIGHT PAGE) DESTINATION NSW

More things to do in THE SHOALHAVEN

EAT It's hard to beat the health benefits of oysters, which are packed with protein, vitamin D, copper, zinc and manganese. Stop in at one of the Shoalhaven's oyster farms to enjoy a fresh-from-the-sea treat.

DO Part of the joy of a trip to a coastal region is embracing the slower pace of life. Spend a day or two hopscotching between pretty townships, such as Callala Bay, Huskisson, Vincentia and Hyams Beach, browsing the stores and stopping to chat with the locals.

STAY Set back from the beach, the chic Bangalay Luxury Villas at Shoalhaven Heads offers an elegant escape from the everyday. ►

Explore the big blue at *Mornington Peninsula, Vic*

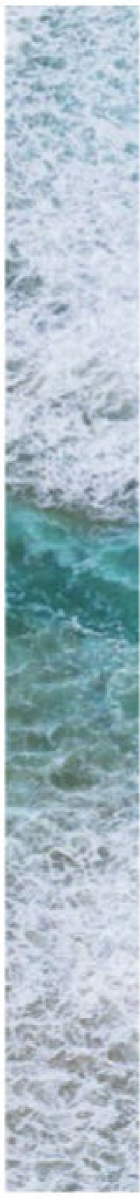
It's the speed that surprises you. Fur seals may look sweet, with their doe eyes and long whiskers, but when they're on their way somewhere, they move at an extraordinary pace. Even more impressive is their grace: the way they flip, corkscrew and somersault through the gin-clear water.

Few things will put a smile on your dial as quickly as a close encounter with a fur seal or a playful bottlenose dolphin. At Mornington Peninsula, located south-east of Melbourne, you can do both. Port Phillip Bay is home to resident populations of these wild creatures; a number of companies, including Polperro Dolphin Swims (polperro.com.au), will take you out for an unforgettable experience.

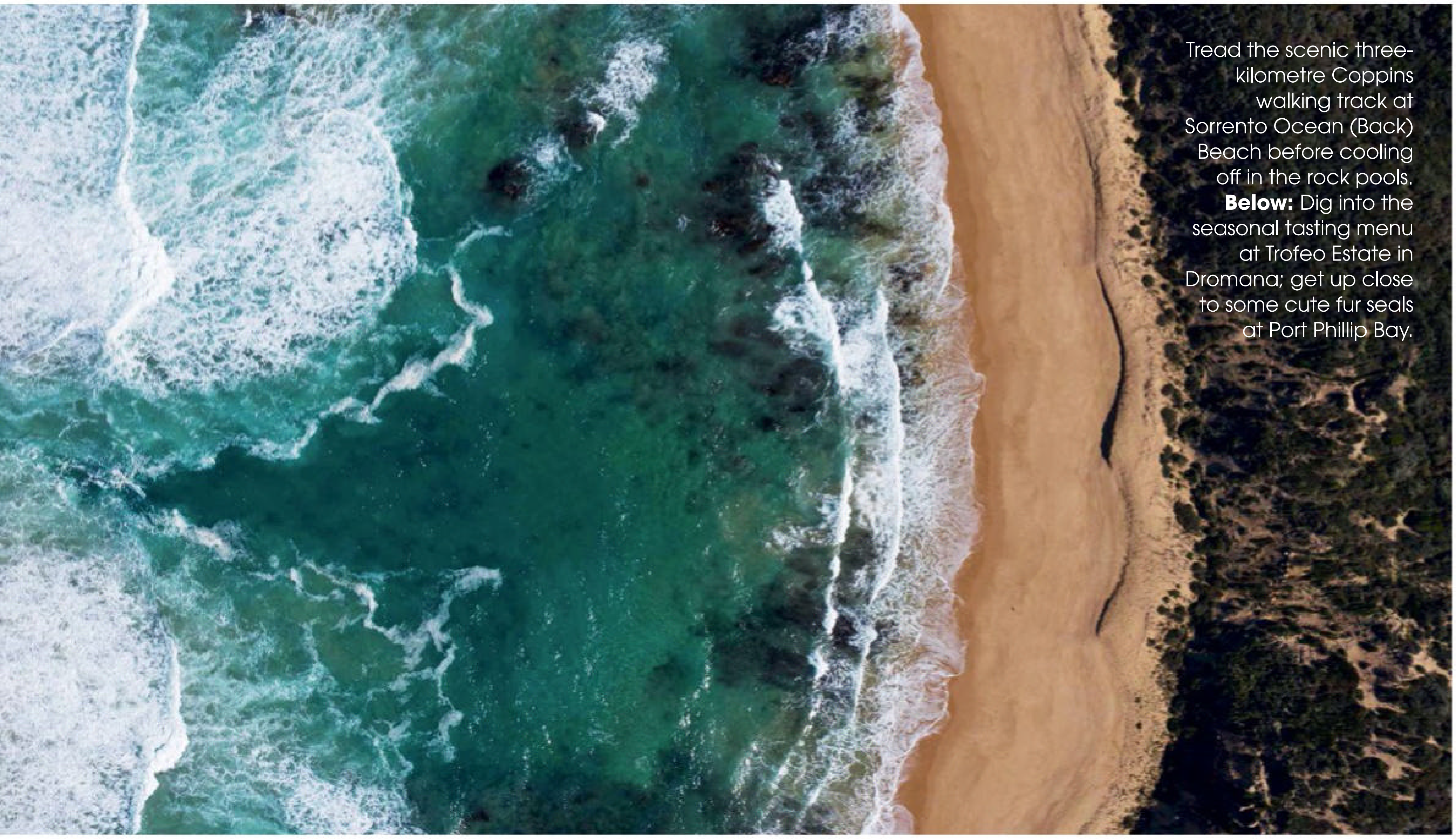
There are many other ways to have an adventure on, or in, the water, too. "The Mornington Peninsula has been a favourite seaside getaway for decades for good reason," says Adam McDonald, general manager of the InterContinental Sorrento Mornington Peninsula (sorrento.intercontinental.com). "You'll never run out of things to do here."

If you want some more underwater action, head to Portsea Pier with a snorkel to discover weedy sea dragons, soft corals and sponges, puffer fish and more. If you enjoy catching a wave, there are plenty of options for surfers (Point Leo is great for beginners; Gunnamatta Beach is famous for its wilder waves), but there are also an array of calm bays to explore. An early morning stand-up paddleboard safari also offers the chance for a little wildlife spotting – keep an eye out for kangaroos grazing on the dew-dappled grass.

And if all that fresh sea air works up your appetite, the Mornington Peninsula is packed with farm gates selling fresh produce and with artisan producers offering a range of goodies to sink your teeth into: everything from olive oil to preserves and cheeses.



This page, from top: Kick back in style on the guest-only pool deck at the new InterContinental Sorrento Mornington Peninsula; enjoy a lazy day on the beach amid the peninsula's iconic pastel-coloured bathing boxes.



Tread the scenic three-kilometre Coppins walking track at Sorrento Ocean (Back) Beach before cooling off in the rock pools. **Below:** Dig into the seasonal tasting menu at Trofeo Estate in Dromana; get up close to some cute fur seals at Port Phillip Bay.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (LEFT PAGE, FROM TOP) GREG ELMS; PETER TARASIUK; (RIGHT PAGE, FROM TOP) SHERPA PROJECTS; PETER TARASIUK; VISIT VICTORIA

More things to do on THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

EAT It's true what they say – food tastes better when you've picked it yourself. A number of local farms let you pick your own – the strawberries at Sunny Ridge Strawberry Farm (sunnyridge.com.au) are famously good.
DO Spend a day soaking in the natural, mineral-rich heated pools of the Peninsula Hot Springs (peninsulahotsprings.com), where you can also enjoy a range of rejuvenating spa treatments.
STAY The seaside village of Sorrento is home to a glam new base, with the opening of the InterContinental Sorrento Mornington Peninsula.

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food

Healthy eating made easy

Mushroom and egg fried rice with chilli oil (page 118)

On the menu this month …

112
Enticing meat-free barbecue recipes.

118
Low-carb meals that look as good as they taste.

Just half a cup of butter beans provides half of your daily needs of manganese, which is essential for bone health.

Grill-seeker

Toss these exciting meat-free meals on the barbie when you're entertaining a crowd or just looking to enjoy a lazy summer evening.

SMOKY PAELLA WITH BUTTER BEANS AND OLIVES

SERVES 6 **HANDS-ON TIME** 15 MINUTES
COOK TIME 30 MINUTES
BARBECUE COOKING TEMP HIGH HEAT

Pinch of saffron strands
3 1⁄3 cups hot reduced-salt vegetable stock
6 mixed baby capsicum, halved and deseeded
1 zucchini, sliced into rounds
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 unwaxed lemon, halved (see note)
1 onion, finely diced
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon dried oregano
300g bomba paella rice (or arborio rice)
400g canned butter beans, drained and rinsed
8 pitted green olives, sliced into rounds
Handful of fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
Small handful of fresh dill, roughly torn, stems discarded
Pinch of sea salt

1. Stir the saffron into the hot vegetable stock in a jug or pan and allow to infuse.
2. In a bowl, toss together the capsicum and zucchini with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Lay the vegetables onto the hot grill along with the lemon halves and cook for about 2–3 minutes on each side, or until char lines appear and the vegetables soften. Set aside in a bowl.
3. Drizzle the remaining tablespoon of olive oil into a 30cm barbecue-safe paella pan and place the pan onto the grill. When the oil is hot, add the diced onion and soften for 5–7 minutes.
4. Add the garlic, smoked paprika and oregano and cook for a further 3–5 minutes, stirring frequently, until fragrant.
5. Stir in rice and coat in the mixture for a few minutes, then add half the stock. Cover pan with foil or close barbecue lid; cook for 15–20 minutes, or until most of the stock has absorbed. Stir in remaining stock along with the butter beans and cook for a further 10 minutes until the stock is absorbed and the dish is starchy and thickened.
6. Scatter cooked vegies over the top and squeeze over charred lemons. Scatter on the olives, parsley and dill. Season with salt, to taste, then allow to stand off heat for 5–10 minutes before eating.
Note To remove wax coating from lemon peel, simply pour boiling water over lemon in the sink and scrub with a vegetable brush.
Tip Prepare all the ingredients beforehand so you can easily throw together the paella outside on the barbecue, with everything you need at hand.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 1448kJ/346cals. Protein 10.4g. Carbs 53.5g. Sat fat 1.4g. Fibre 7.8g. Sodium 482mg* ►

The sweet mango tempers the heat of this spicy dish beautifully.

SPICED YOGHURT CAULIFLOWER AND MANGO

Recipe on page 116

PULLED MANGO TACOS WITH BEANS, RADISHES AND CORIANDER
Recipe on page 116

SPICED YOGHURT CAULIFLOWER AND MANGO

SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME 15 MINUTES, PLUS
2 HOURS MARINATING TIME
BARBECUE COOKING TEMP MEDIUM HEAT

6 tablespoons plain soy yoghurt (for a vegan option)
1 tablespoon sunflower oil
1 tablespoon mild curry paste (opt for vegan)
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
½ teaspoon ground cumin
Pinch of dried chilli flakes
Pinch of sea salt
1 small cauliflower, leaves discarded, broken into about 16 bite-sized florets
2 firm mangoes, peeled and diced into about 12 bite-sized chunks
Juice of ¼ lemon
Small handful of fresh coriander leaves, roughly torn

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the yoghurt, oil, curry paste, turmeric, cumin, chilli flakes and sea salt until combined.
2. Add the cauliflower florets and coat in the marinade. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a lid and allow to marinate for 2 hours.
3. Shake off excess yoghurt marinade from the cauliflower florets and thread onto 4 metal skewers, alternating with the mango chunks. Aim for 4 florets and 3 mango chunks per skewer.
4. Place the skewers onto the hot grill and cook for 12–15 minutes, turning a few times to ensure even cooking. Remove from the grill and carefully slide the cauliflower and mango off the skewers. Squeeze over the lemon juice, scatter with coriander leaves and serve.
Tips As the mangoes cook on the barbecue, they soften and become sticky. Use slightly underripe mangoes so they thread firmly onto the skewer without breaking off during cooking. Serve this dish with a juicy tofu steak and grilled vegies.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 737kJ/176cals. Protein 3.3g. Carbs 23.7g. Sat fat 0.9g. Fibre 3.5g. Sodium 271mg*

PULLED MANGO TACOS WITH BEANS, RADISHES AND CORIANDER

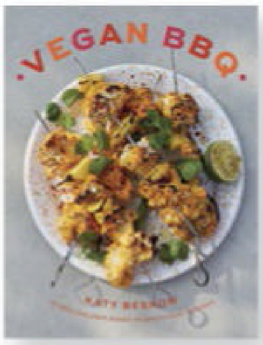
SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME 10 MINUTES
BARBECUE COOKING TEMP MEDIUM HEAT

1 x 400g can of red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
3 spring onions, finely chopped
2 radishes, finely diced
3cm piece of cucumber, finely diced
Handful of fresh coriander leaves, chopped
Juice of ½ lime
Pinch of smoked sea salt
Greek yoghurt or vegan yoghurt, to serve (optional)

Pulled mango
2 tablespoons sunflower oil
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
Pinch of mild chilli powder
Pinch of sea salt
2 mangoes, peeled and sliced lengthways into 4 'cheeks' per mango
2 red capsicums deseeded and sliced into 8 thick strips
8 crunchy corn taco shells
2 tablespoons vegan mayonnaise

1. In a bowl, stir together the kidney beans, spring onions, radishes, cucumber, coriander and lime juice. Season to taste with smoked sea salt. Allow to infuse while you light the barbecue.
2. For the pulled mango, in a separate bowl, whisk together the oil, smoked paprika, chilli powder and sea salt. Lay out the mango and capsicum on a plate and brush both sides with the oil mix.
3. Use tongs to place the mango and capsicum slices onto the hot grill and cook for 5–6 minutes on each side, or until softened and sizzling and grill lines appear.
4. Lay out the taco shells and spoon in the bean mix. Add the capsicum slices.
5. Place the mango onto a chopping board and use forks to gently pull the mango apart into finer shreds. Place into the taco shells, top with some mayonnaise and serve while still hot. Serve with Greek or vegan yoghurt on the side, if using.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 1994kJ/477cals. Protein 10.8g. Carbs 52g. Sat fat 2g. Fibre 12.8g. Sodium 463mg*



Edited extract from *Vegan BBQ* by Katy Beskow (Quadrille Books, $29.99). Photography by Luke Albert.

Tofu helps to lower 'bad' cholesterol and is a great source of iron.

TERIYAKI TOFU WITH CHARRED GREENS

SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 15 MINUTES
COOK TIME 10 MINUTES, PLUS
1 HOUR STANDING TIME
BARBECUE COOKING TEMP MEDIUM HEAT

Scant ½ cup reduced-salt soy sauce
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon maple syrup
1 tablespoon mirin
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1cm piece of ginger, peeled and grated
Pinch of dried chilli flakes
280g block of pre-pressed extra-firm tofu, sliced horizontally into 4 pieces
12 broccolini florets
16 sugar snap peas
¼ savoy cabbage, cut into 4 wedges
½ tablespoon sunflower oil, for brushing
1 teaspoon sesame seeds

1. Put the soy sauce, brown sugar, maple syrup, mirin, garlic, ginger and chilli flakes into a pan. Heat over a medium heat for 5–6 minutes until the mixture is bubbling, then remove from heat and allow to cool and thicken for a few minutes.
2. Blot the slices of tofu with kitchen paper or a clean cloth to remove any excess moisture. Score the tofu lightly in criss-cross pattern on one side (this will help the tofu to absorb the marinade). Place the tofu slices into a deep dish, then pour over the teriyaki marinade. Allow to stand for 1 hour, turning the tofu a couple of times.
3. Skewer broccolini, sugar snap peas and cabbage wedges onto 4 metal skewers, with 3 pieces of broccoli, 4 sugar snap peas and a wedge of cabbage on each. Brush with a little sunflower oil.
4. Shake excess marinade off tofu, then carefully place on hot grill. Cook for 4–5 minutes on each side, turning when the cooked side appears firm.
5. Add the loaded skewers to the hot grill and cook for 4–5 minutes, turning frequently until tender and charred.
6. Remove the tofu slices from the grill and place on serving plates. Scatter each one with a few sesame seeds. Remove the skewers from the grill and carefully slide the vegetables onto the plates, placing the broccolini on top of the teriyaki tofu.
Tips Mirin is a sweet Japanese rice wine, which adds a little acidity to this dish, but less than vinegar. This tofu meal goes really well with brown rice or soba noodles.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 919kJ/220cals. Protein 14.5g. Carbs 17.6g. Sat fat 1g. Fibre 7g. Sodium 1008mg*

Carb appeal

Dig in without the waistline worry to these yummy, low-carb meals. They're so attractive, too!

MUSHROOM AND EGG FRIED RICE WITH CHILLI OIL

SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME 20 MINUTES

⅓ cup basmati rice
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 zucchini, diced
1 large head broccoli, stem sliced and florets chopped into 2cm pieces
1 bunch coriander, leaves and stems finely chopped
450g Swiss brown mushrooms, sliced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup frozen green peas
3 cups baby spinach leaves
2 cups cauliflower rice
1 tablespoon salt-reduced tamari
4 large free-range eggs

To serve
2 tablespoons unsalted roasted cashews, roughly chopped
4 spring onions, finely chopped
2 teaspoons chilli oil

1. Place rice and ⅔ cup water in a saucepan over medium-high heat and bring to the boil. Reduce to a simmer and allow to cook for 10 minutes, undisturbed. Remove the pan from the heat and allow the rice to sit, covered, for 10–15 minutes. Remove the lid and fluff the rice with a fork.
2. Meanwhile, heat sesame oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add zucchini, broccoli stems and coriander stems and cook for 5 minutes, tossing occasionally, until softened. Add mushrooms, broccoli florets and garlic, toss together, then place lid on pan. Cook, undisturbed, for 5 minutes to allow mushrooms to reduce. Remove the lid and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes until the excess liquid evaporates.
3. Add peas, spinach, cauliflower rice, the cooked basmati rice and tamari and stir until warmed through. Push rice to one side of pan, then crack in the eggs. Softly scramble the eggs for about 30 seconds and then mix with the rice.
4. Remove pan from the heat and stir the coriander leaves through. Divide the fried rice between four bowls, top with the cashews and spring onion, drizzle the chilli oil over and serve.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 1284kJ/307cals. Protein 20.1g. Carbs 18g. Sat fat 2.5g. Fibre 9.9g. Sodium 369mg* ►

CUMIN CHICKEN WITH PUMPKIN AND GARLIC YOGHURT

Recipe on page 122

SALMON FRITTATA WITH DILL AND CHIVES

Recipe on page 122

CUMIN CHICKEN WITH PUMPKIN AND GARLIC YOGHURT

SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 15 MINUTES
COOK TIME 30 MINUTES

300g peeled butternut pumpkin, chopped into 3cm chunks
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
⅓ cup walnuts
600g chicken tenderloins
2 teaspoons ground coriander

Garlic yoghurt
2 cloves garlic, skins left on
¾ cup natural yoghurt

Kale salad
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
2 bunches broccolini, chopped into 5cm pieces
4 cups kale leaves, stalks removed, roughly chopped
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
Juice of ½ lemon

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan-forced).
2. Place the pumpkin and garlic cloves (for the garlic yoghurt) on a baking tray. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the cumin and 1 teaspoon of the olive oil over and toss pumpkin and garlic in the oil. Spread pumpkin and garlic out on tray and bake in the oven for 25 minutes until pumpkin is golden on the edges and tender. For the last 5 minutes of cooking, place the walnuts on the tray to lightly toast them.
3. To make kale salad, heat ½ teaspoon of the olive oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add broccolini and cook, tossing occasionally, for 3 minutes, until bright green and slightly tender. Add to a large bowl with the kale.
4. Place the mustard, remaining olive oil and the lemon juice in a small bowl and mix to combine. Add the mixture to the bowl with the greens and toss to coat.
5. Place the chicken in a large bowl with the remaining cumin, the coriander, some freshly ground black pepper and 1 teaspoon of the olive oil. Return the frying pan to the heat and add the remaining olive oil. Add the chicken and cook for 3 minutes on each side until browned and cooked through.
6. For the garlic yoghurt, remove the skins from the garlic and place the garlic in a bowl. Mash with a fork, then add the yoghurt to the bowl and stir to combine.
7. Divide the roasted pumpkin, chicken and kale salad between four bowls. Serve with the garlic yoghurt and the walnuts crumbled over the top.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 2423kJ/580cals. Protein 44.1g. Carbs 20.9g. Sat fat 7.5g. Fibre 9.2g. Sodium 162mg*

SALMON FRITTATA WITH DILL AND CHIVES

SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME 45 MINUTES

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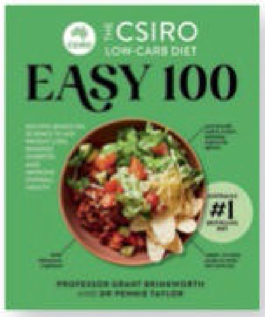
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
3 golden shallots, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
8 large free-range eggs
⅓ cup full-fat milk
1 bunch chives, finely chopped, plus extra to serve
½ cup dill leaves, finely chopped, plus extra to serve
200g hot smoked salmon or smoked ocean trout (see note on Fish in Shiitake Mushroom Broth recipe, opposite, regarding sodium)
1 bunch thin asparagus, woody ends trimmed (if you can only find thick spears, slice spears in half lengthways)
Lemon wedges, to serve

Salad
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 butter lettuce, leaves roughly chopped
1 Lebanese cucumber, thinly sliced

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan-forced) and grease and line a 20cm round cake tin.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the shallots and garlic and cook for 4–5 minutes until golden. Set aside to cool.
3. In a large bowl, place the eggs, milk, chives, dill and a little freshly ground black pepper and whisk to combine. Add half the cooked shallots and half the garlic, along with the smoked salmon, and mix to combine. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin, add the asparagus spears and scatter over the remaining cooked shallots and garlic. Bake for 35–40 minutes until the egg has cooked through and the frittata is set.
4. For the salad, place the olive oil, lemon juice and mustard in a large bowl and mix to combine. Add the lettuce and cucumber and toss to coat.
5. Slice frittata into quarters and divide between four plates. Serve with the salad, topped with the extra chives and dill and the lemon wedges on the side.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 1615kJ/386cals. Protein 29.8g. Carbs 5.3g. Sat fat 5.8g. Fibre 4g. Sodium 673mg*



Edited extract from *The CSIRO Low-Carb Diet Easy 100* by Professor Grant Brinkworth and Dr Pennie Taylor (Macmillan, $39.99). Photography by Jeremy Simons and Rob Palmer.

FISH IN SHIITAKE MUSHROOM BROTH WITH CHINESE GREENS

SERVES 4 **HANDS-ON TIME** 15 MINUTES
COOK TIME 15 MINUTES

4 dried shiitake mushrooms
1 cup boiling water
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2cm piece of ginger, julienned
2 spring onions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
750g mixed mushrooms (such as shiitake, enoki, Swiss brown, oyster, king brown)
2 cups salt-reduced chicken stock (see notes)
1 tablespoon salt-reduced soy sauce
1 bunch Chinese broccoli or choy sum, trimmed
600g boneless firm white fish fillets, such as barramundi, snapper or flathead; skin on (see notes)

1. Place the dried shiitake mushrooms in a small bowl and cover with the boiling water. Allow to sit for 10 minutes and then drain, reserving the liquid. Slice the mushrooms into quarters.
2. Heat olive oil in a large, deep frying pan over medium heat. Add the ginger, white part of the spring onion and all the mushrooms (dried and mixed) and cook for 2 minutes, tossing in the oil until fragrant. Add the chicken stock, reserved mushroom soaking water and the soy sauce. Stir to combine, then add Chinese broccoli or choy sum. Place fish on top, cover and then simmer for 10 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through and the Chinese greens are tender.
3. Divide the fish and vegies between four shallow bowls. Spoon the remaining stock over the top, garnish with the green part of the spring onion and serve.

Notes: Commercial chicken stock is usually very high in sodium, so check the label to ensure your stock contains less than 50mg sodium per 100g. Seafood is high in naturally occurring sodium. This recipe is slightly above the recommended 500mg per meal, so please be mindful that, if you're following a special diet, you aim to keep your sodium under 2000mg daily.

NUTRITION *(per serve) 1375kJ/329cals. Protein 34.6g. Carbs 2.5g. Sat fat 3.5g. Fibre 3.4g. Sodium 619mg*

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All going swimmingly

Dogs love the water as much as we do, so keep yours happy and safe (or encourage a timid pet) with these pointers.

BY LIZZ SCHUMER

Whenever you're at the beach or near a pool with your pup, health and safety should be top of mind. "If you want your dog to really like the water, remember the three Ss: short, sweet and safe," advises dog trainer Colleen Demling-Riley. Here's what you need to know before you open your pool or head out to the beach.

EASE INTO SWIMMING

Dogs might seem like natural swimmers, but never just throw yours into the water. That can instill a fear of water that's hard to overcome, warns dog trainer Jessica Edgerly. Instead, get in the water with your pup and use a tasty treat or some fun toys to encourage them to wade in. Start with only 10 minutes in the water at a time to keep them excited and engaged, Colleen says. Because dogs don't understand clear water, Jessica suggests first getting them acclimated to a pond or a creek if possible. If you have a pool, teach your dog how to use the stairs to get out on their own, as a pool's steep sides can confuse them.

USE A LIFE VEST

When teaching your dog to swim, outfit them with a life vest, harness and leash, both trainers advise. A life vest can help teach a new swimmer to paddle with both their front legs and their back ones, since it keeps their rear end afloat, explains Jessica. Heading out on a boat? Dogs should always wear a life vest and a leash. Be sure the vest is brightly coloured so you can spot your pup in the water and that it has a sturdy back handle that you can grab if they fall overboard.

KNOW WHEN TO FINISH

A dog that doesn't take enough breaks can develop a painful condition called cold water tail or swimmer's tail, Jessica notes. After long swimming sessions, their tail might look dead or broken. It usually resolves after a week or so of rest.

After your pet gets out of the water, rinse them off to remove any chemicals, and always dry them thoroughly, especially around their ears and armpits, Colleen says. Dogs with thick undercoats, such as labradors and huskies, are particularly prone to developing painful hot spots if they stay damp too long. Also, keep a bowl of fresh water nearby, and don't let your dog drink from anywhere else – pool chemicals, algae and salt water can upset their tummy. If you notice any vomiting, bloating or even seizures, take your pet to the vet right away. ►

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

Business deal

Has your pet left you a little message in an unfortunate place. Don't fret – these proven mess-busting techniques will help!

BY CAROLYN FORTE

Accidents happen, but the secret to ensuring that they don't happen again and again is eliminating the scent as well as the stain. The smell brings the animal back to pee in the same area, so it's important to identify your pain point and then follow this simple advice.

FOR CARPETS AND UPHOLSTERY

A pet-specific cleaner contains enzymes that kill the odour-causing bacteria in urine so your pet won't be a repeat offender. First, gently blot the stain with a clean paper towel or rag. Spray the spot until it's saturated and then dab with a damp cloth. For a heavily soiled area, leave it covered with a new damp cloth for up to 12 hours and then uncover and let it dry naturally.

FOR WOODEN FLOORS

Timing is key if your pet has an accident on your wooden floorboards. Rub with a soft cloth in an inconspicuous corner first to make sure the wood is sealed: If the finish doesn't dull or smear, you're all set. As long as you treat the spot quickly, paper towels and a hardwood cleaner should do the trick. Use paper towels to wipe up the mess, then spray with a wood floor cleaner formulated for pet problems. If the stain soaks in and discolours your floor, call a professional refinisher.

FOR SOFT SURFACES THAT TRAP SMELLS

Look for a pet-specific odour-eliminating fabric spray. This will help get rid of trapped scents in carpets, upholstery and draperies. Maintenance also helps. Vacuum weekly, wash your pet's bedding regularly and spot-treat even small stains. Consider investing in a small handheld vacuum cleaner that'll help spot-clean areas between professional spray treatments. P

PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCK

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Kate Waterhouse

The journalist, style icon and Aussie racing royal, 39, shares what she's learnt about life.

1 **THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON THAT MUM (THOROUGHBRED TRAINER) GAI WATERHOUSE EVER TAUGHT ME...** was to work hard at whatever I do, to be positive and, above all, be kind to others. She's been such a great role model to me and I'm lucky to have her as my mum.

2 **I BELIEVE IT'S ALWAYS GOOD MANNERS TO...** listen to people. You can have a million small conversations, but it's important to really hear what people say. You can never stop learning.

3 **STYLE IS...** all about being authentic to yourself. You can take trends and still make them your own.

4 **WHEN I WAS 21, I USED TO THINK THAT LIFE AT MY AGE WOULD BE REALLY BORING. HAHA...** But I probably didn't realise how the simple things in life are the most important and enjoyable. There's nothing I like more than to be with my kids and husband [former professional rugby league player Luke Ricketson] and doing simple things like going to the beach or taking a walk somewhere. At 21, I couldn't imagine that.

5 **WHAT I'VE LEARNT ABOUT TRUE FRIENDSHIP IS...** that a true friend is always there for you. You don't have to speak every day, but every time you do see each other, it's like nothing has changed and you pick up right where you left off.

6 **I'M HAPPIEST WHEN...** I'm with my husband and children in the sunshine, near a beach, and eating good food.

7 **THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS I DO FOR MY HEALTH ARE...** eating well, training a few times a week and doing Pilates. As a mum, I have to look after myself so I can look after my kids. If I feel good, then I can be there for them. Skincare is also a big thing for me. Since I was 15, I've had a beauty routine and have often used Clarins. My favourite is Double Serum, which I use each morning and night.

8 **WHEN PEOPLE RECOGNISE ME, THEY USUALLY SAY...** that I'm shorter than they'd imagined. [Kate is 167 centimetres tall.]

9 **MY FAVOURITE SUNDAY MORNING RITUAL IS...** pancakes at home! It's become a bit of a tradition for the girls and I.

Kate Waterhouse is a Clarins advocate

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